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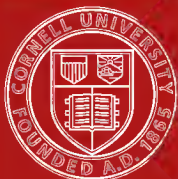
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EARLY RECOLLECTIONS  
OF  
NEWPORT, R.I.,

FROM THE YEAR 1793 TO 1811.

BY  
GEORGE G. CHANNING.

NEWPORT, R.I.:  
A. J. WARD; CHARLES E. HAMMETT, JR.  
BOSTON, MASS.: NICHOLS AND NOYES.  
1868.

*For*

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LULLED in the countless chambers of the brain,  
Our thoughts are linked by many a hidden chain.  
Awake but one, and, lo, what myriads rise !  
Each stamps its image as the other flies.  
Each, as the various avenues of sense  
Delight or sorrow to the soul dispense,  
Brightens or fades ; yet all, with magic art,  
Control the latent fibres of the heart.

Childhood's loved group revisits every scene, —  
The tangled wood-walk, and the tufted green.  
Indulgent MEMORY wakes, and, lo ! they live,  
Clothed with far softer hues than light can give.  
Thou first, best friend that Heaven assigns below,  
To soothe and sweeten all the cares we know ;  
Whose glad suggestions still each vain alarm,  
When nature fades, and life forgets to charm,  
Thee would the Muse invoke : to thee belong  
The sage's precept, and the poet's song.  
What softened views thy magic glass reveals,  
When o'er the landscape Time's meek twilight steals !

*The Pleasures of Memory.*



## PREFACE.

---

I HAVE not stretched this "simple story" of Newport life, manners, and customs to the length which it might have reached, if I had chosen; because I felt that ample justice to my subject could be done within narrower limits, and that a less pretentious volume might attain a more extensive circulation, and so prove more useful to my native town, not merely now, but in years to come.

Had Newport remained stationary as when I left it sixty years ago, I might never have thought of reviving in order the events, &c., which are herein described: but it having become literally a watering-place, viz. a summer residence for fashionables, it occurred to me, that I might profitably unlock the storehouse of memory, and give such a familiar narrative of "olden time" as would prove acceptable in old homesteads and to new-comers; and I now sub-

mit the work with all its unintentional errors, if any should crop out, to the residents, and to the visitors who, it is presumed, will flock from year to year to "*the island*" not surpassed for pleasantness and salubrity, even by that from which it derived its name.

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE impressions which the mind receives during the period between childhood and early manhood remain, in a great degree, indelible during the subsequent periods of life, even to old age. Speak when you will to an old man of the scenes which he witnessed during his childhood, of what occurred at school, of the age and disposition of his playmates, of the church where he was christened, of the pew at the head of which he stood enfolded by a parent's arm, and from which he gazed at pleasure over the whole congregation, or with wide-open mouth received his first lesson in psalmody from the choir, whilst they sang the sweet old tunes of Jordan, Lenox, Ocean, Bristol, Saint Martin's, Old Hundred, &c.; speak to him of the street-gutter in which, after a rain, he erected his tiny water-wheel, amusing himself with its circling eddies and mud-splashes; of the vast

delight which swelled his young bosom when "Independent Day" was ushered in, with the roar of cannon from Fort Wolcott, the ringing of bells, and the *reveille* drum-beat; of the "star-spangled banner," thrown to the breeze from hill-top and "fore-top," proclaiming a nation's birthday; and, finally, speak to him of the day of national sorrow, when the same bells, muffled to a plaintive tone, and the same guns, with measured solemnity, announced Washington's death, and of the Sunday following, when the churches were draped in black, and he listened to the music, subdued to a familiar "requiem," — Pleyel's Hymn; and then look into the old man's eyes, and watch his quivering lips, and listen to the "thousand and one stories" of that early time, — if you would know of the vividness and particularity of the memories clustering about home.

It will be seen from the foregoing, that the writer has had in mind the picture of his childhood, gradually expanding, and softening to the autumn of his being. Believing that a familiar narrative of his recollections of the place where he was born and brought up will yield more

pleasure and instruction to the few remaining of his own time, and especially to those who have more recently taken possession of the lovely island, than an elaborate history, it will be his aim to interest children, as well as men and women, with a simple story of what he once saw, heard, and felt. Children like to read about children; and such reading, faithfully descriptive of the faults, follies, sins, and virtues of the young, based upon *experience*, will often prove the most wholesome means for their early moral and spiritual training. Who has ever forgotten those vivid sensations of pleasure or mortification, which printed statements of juvenile virtue and vice have occasioned? I shall never forget the picture-books which were issued, in rapid succession, by Mr. Newbery, from his juvenile book shop, at the corner of St. Paul's Churchyard, London; viz., King Pippin, Farmer Gyles, Harry Graceless, Goody Two-Shoes, &c. "Robinson Crusoe" was my delight. Who will ever be able to parallel that inimitable story of De Foe? Numberless attempts have been made; but they have proved utter failures. Mr. Day's delightful work, entitled "Sandford and Mer-

ton,"\* was a great favorite. Even "Gulliver's Travels" was rendered, by its illustrations, a fascinating book to children. "Valentine and Orson" was likewise a great favorite.

Children seldom fail of being interested in graver themes than those already named. The Sunday school and Bible classes can be electrified by happy illustrations of gospel truths. Christianity should never be presented to a child in a dubious shape. I shall never forget my happy sensations, when, at ten years of age, I listened to the reading of the Scriptures, and to the prayers offered by a dear brother, in my mother's family. Reverence and faith then awoke in my heart; and fresh in remembrance are those devotional exercises which softened

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\* No story-book, in early and late life, has interested me more than this. "Thomas Day," its author, "was born in 1748, bred to the law, and called to the bar, but very soon left the profession, and devoted his time to literary pursuits, and became the advocate of human kin. His admirable poem, 'The Dying Negro,' and his 'Fragment of a Letter on Slavery,' mark him amongst the first of those who exerted their efforts to emancipate a large portion of the human race from cruelty and tyranny. His latest work, the 'History of Sandford and Merton,' will long remain an instance of the successful application of genius to form the minds of youth to active and manly virtue." It is a book that should be in every family. It is instructive, and vastly entertaining.



my heart, as they did that of a lad 'belonging to the same school with myself, with whom I grew up in great intimacy, who gave me some of his early and late experiences. These revived in my mind a happy experience of the poet Milton, who had the satisfaction, in looking back to his youth and early manhood, of being able to say, that in various places and situations, where many things of doubtful character were deemed lawful, he could take God to witness "I have lived sound, and untouched from all profligacy and vice; having this thought perpetually with me, that, though I might escape the eyes of men, I certainly could not the eyes of God." The truest life may be predicted of that soonest consecrated to God, that which dawns in the fresh Heaven-inspired morning, when the dew is on the grass, and before the desire has been felt "to catch folly as it flies."

Most natural and beautiful is the affection which prompts the parent to preserve on canvas, or photographic plates, the face of his child; but it is marvellous, that he is not at least equally desirous to preserve those more lovely features of the soul which find early expression in the

child's little eager, outstretched arms at the sound of its father's voice, and still earlier speech as it nestles confidently on its mother's bosom; and such heavenly beauty will be the sure reward of parental fidelity.

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## EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.



# EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### CHILDHOOD.

"This fond attachment to the well-known place,  
Whence first we started into life's long race,  
Maintains its hold with such unfailing sway,  
We feel it even in age, and at our latest day."

MY earliest recollection is of a Small-pox Hospital, established at Conanicut, a small island west of Newport, about eight miles in length and one in breadth, and hid from the centre of the town by Fort Wolcott, named in honor of Oliver Wolcott. He was a brave man through the Revolutionary War, a member of Congress, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. I was but three and a half years old when taken by my father on board a ferry-boat lying at Ferry Wharf, and conveyed to the island, there to be inoculated with small-pox virus. Of course, I was too young to understand the controversy, both pub-

lic and private, which raged at the time, in consequence of the daring proposition made by Dr. Isaac Senter, to open so dangerous an establishment; but the doctor's great medical reputation, and all but universal popularity, overcame the opposition; and the hospital very soon was in full operation. Excellent nurses were obtained; and the work assigned to them was indeed very burdensome, more so on account of the constant care of so many children. I have a perfect recollection of the skinless arms and hands of the patients, which were daily exhibited for the inspection of the physician. Many were very sick; but all recovered. The usual precautions were taken, by the free use of disinfecting agents, to prevent any ill effects, when communication should be renewed between the island and the town. I very well recollect how suffocating was the process, when I was held over a rosin-pan to be smoked. I also remember how excited I became on seeing our colored man, Fortune, throw silver coins, handed to him by my father, on burning coals in the kitchen fireplace. It was explained to me in due time, the why and wherefore of



this burning of silver. Very soon after these purifications, we were permitted to return to our several homes; and the good doctor was congratulated warmly on his great success. I carried the scar on my left arm as a sort of trophy, and would frequently pull up my frock-sleeve to prove what a brave boy I had been. My keen memory has retained all of the little incidents connected with that hospital experience. The food given to us little children was bread and milk, and meal dumplings and molasses. Nothing else crossed our lips, save some bitter stuff, now and then, in the way of medicine. When getting well, we, young and old, were permitted to ride short distances in an ox-cart. One morning, the pin intended to hold the cart-body in its place got loose, and down we all tumbled into sand and dirt. When riding, it was usual to cover the patients with blankets. Although so young, I remember the rig of the boat, and the play of the waves, as we were conveyed to the opposite shore. My father held me on his knee; and when we reached our home, about the dinner-hour, I was regaled with a scrap of meat from the wing of a bird.

## CHAPTER II.

## ABOUT HOME.

THE next event within my childish recollections was the death of my father, about six months after our return from Conanicut; viz., Sept. 21, 1793. I remember being taken to the room where his body had been prepared for burial. I retain a vivid recollection of his countenance to-day; and it is seventy-four years since I stood in that chamber of death. I witnessed from the house of a relative, where I and my younger brother had been sent, the funeral procession down Mary Street; and nothing struck me so forcibly as the white handkerchiefs held by my elder brothers, and which they frequently put to their eyes. I was not old enough then to understand the cause of this. Carriages were not used at funerals. The attendance on such occasions was very general. The procession formed in pairs,—men on the right hand,

women on the left. The hearse was plain, no plumes, and the coffin covered with a velvet pall. I call to mind the gloves laid upon the coffin, a customary gratuity to the "bearers." After the interment, the friends of the deceased were requested by the sexton to precede the mourners to their home. When funerals were arranged to take place early in the week, notices were read from all the pulpits, save that of "Old Trinity." At that church, the sexton, Mr. Daniel Vernon, would give the invitation after the benediction, in a most distinct manner from the organ-loft. Another method was adopted for notifying the time and place of a funeral. A list of names of those to be invited was given to the sexton of the church where the deceased had been accustomed to attend, and who, upon calling at each door, would say, "You are *bid* to the funeral of Mr. or Mrs. —, at the second tolling of the south or north bell," as the case might be; viz., the Episcopal, Rev. Theodore Dehon's, or the Congregationalist, Rev. William Pattin's. Prayer was offered at the house; but the Scriptures were not read, nor hymns sung, except at the Episcopal Church.

Another reminiscence of my childhood was the music of the chimney-sweeps, when, at early morn, the cry "Sweep-ho!" reached my ear, and my eyes beheld their sooty heads crowning the chimney-tops. At that time, the only fuel was wood; and, as the town was built of *tinder*, otherwise pine lumber, and so liable to frequent conflagrations, it behooved householders—in accordance with the law then existing, which made any neglect of chimney-sweeping a penal offence—to use every precaution against *fires*. In the midst of so many wooden buildings, every one felt bound to maintain a sort of "Self-incorporated Mutual Insurance Company." Thus, by vigilance in each residence, there was but one fire in Thames Street during the whole of my juvenility and early manhood. As a further proof of our forefathers' bump of caution, I have a series of almanacs bound in one volume, from 1770 to 1774; on the margins of which, records were kept with reference to the regular chimney-sweepings, in order to prevent any dangerous accumulations of soot.

There were only six brick buildings in the town—including the State House, oftener called

Court House, and the market at the foot of the "Parade"—in 1793; and no more afterwards, during my minority. One reason for this was a prevalent notion that the humidity of the atmosphere of Newport would be absorbed in brick edifices, rendering them unhealthy abodes. I shall never forget the burning of Mr. Francis Brinley's extensive ropewalks,—erected near the present site of the Fillmore House,—the most extensive establishment of the kind in the country. The smoke from the immense tar-kettles, and from the large amount of the same combustible in barrels, was wafted by a strong wind into every section of the town. The houses on the hill were largely impregnated with it. It happened in August, 1797, one of the very hottest days, rendering the air insupportable.

It was a sight worth seeing,—the processions of hardy seamen, from time to time passing by our house and down Mary Street, bearing upon their shoulders immense hempen cables, manufactured by Mr. Brinley for the use of United-States frigates sent to this noble harbor for their outfit. It was curious, the ease with which these huge ropes were borne through the streets by the

sailors, who took the "lock-step;" and, by this means, the weight of the cable was distributed, and none were overburdened.

I was a sickly child at the first, being very thin, face pale, and frame wiry. Neighbors were busy in prophesying my early death; but my mother, upon hearing from them, as she frequently did, that I could not be *raised*, showed no uneasiness, and took no pains to remove their convictions of my speedy demise. Her mind was made up that I should live. Her system of hygiene was quite novel at the time, but now almost universal in well-ordered families. Her first step caused much commotion in the neighborhood. She had me dipped in water drawn from a deep well, so cold that the cattle were prone to breathe upon it for a while, and agitate it with their muzzles, before they would drink. In this icy grave I was daily buried. The sensations I then experienced left so deep a mark upon the memory, that, up to this late period of my life, I retain the keenest recollection of their poignancy. But no matter: these daily immersions worked well,—worked to a charm. I was fed entirely upon bread and milk, and whitepot,

pronounced *whitpot*. This last was strictly a Rhode-Island dish, and sometimes called the "poor man's custard." It was compounded of best white Indian meal (only ground in the south part of the State), and of pure, new milk, with enough of the best molasses to give it a yellow tinge. After leaving my native home for good, I made repeated efforts to obtain a taste of this favorite dish. I procured the same meal, and unadulterated milk, with genuine treacle, but always failed to get Rhode-Island whitpot. If I could have taken with me to my new home a "Newport cook," all would have gone well. A Newport cook! such a treasure could nowhere else be found. The "journey-cake," vulgarly called *Johnny-cake*, — how can I sufficiently extol it? Its manufacture is a lost art. No breakfast-cake could compare with it for tastefulness and nourishment. By this method of dieting, if such it could be called, and a judicious use of sulphur, for nearly three years, I throve until my bones began to grow, and were soon covered with abundant flesh of uncommon whiteness and purity. From being a miserable-looking boy, I became a vigorous youth, and an athlete of no

mean pretensions. Thanks to a good Providence, and to maternal tenderness, for a long life of almost uninterrupted health!

My mother, whom memory has photographed more perfectly than chemical art could ever have done, was the daughter of William Ellery, whose patriotism and courage were evinced, when he put his signature, as one of the representatives from Rhode Island, to the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776. She received her education in the stern school of Puritanism, which eminently fitted her for the responsible trust which devolved upon her at the death of her husband; namely, the care of a large family of sons and daughters, to be brought up and educated, and with means so limited, that none but herself, I feel sure, could have escaped running into debt. Her book-keeping was not after the Italian method (double entry), but strictly by "single entry." In one word, she never bought what she had not ready money to pay for.

There were no written invitations to parties in my day. The way, if one wished to assemble many or few friends to an early evening



gathering, was to send a son or daughter of suitable age with "mother's compliments to Mrs. or Miss ——, requesting the pleasure of her company to tea this or any other evening, and, if agreeable, to bring her work." By this method, social intercourse was maintained, without severely taxing the purse. Money, now so lavished upon furbelows and jewels to adorn a single family, would have rendered doubly beautiful hundreds of Newport girls, in their cotton cambric slips with a single hem or flounce. "Waste not, want not," was a maxim practically enforced, without the aid of Miss Edgeworth's charming story to that effect.

These impromptu invitations seldom failed to attract groups of very charming and sensible women. All stiffness and formality, common to more stately occasions, were unknown at these sociables.

I will cite one more incident in proof of the comprehensive way in which money matters were treated when I was young. At Dr. Patin's church in Clarke Street, notice had been given that a weekly collection of subscriptions would be taken up, or, if preferred, monthly or

half-yearly. Upon trial, it was ascertained that only one pew-holder wished the privilege of contributing weekly. She was a "mother in Israel," with limited means, and whose annual bestowment amounted to thirteen dollars. She was asked by the church committee to withhold the weekly sum of twenty-five cents, as it would save them some trouble in making fifty-two entries per year, and to contribute the whole amount per annum, if agreeable. - The old lady straightened herself up, and said,—"It will be much easier for me to pay the small sum per week than the larger amount per year; and so I must decline your proposal." She was right; and if every one of small means would adopt the above rule, and liquidate the small items of indebtedness as often as they are incurred, there would be fewer hard thoughts entertained, and a world of trouble saved.

The most prominent traits in my mother's character were a love of independence, great firmness, inflexible integrity, and unqualified adherence to simple truth. She was deeply offended by paltry equivocation; but her with-

ering look, on the utterance of a downright lie, inflicted a keener wound than corporal punishment. She exacted reverence from a child, not merely as her right, but as an act beneficial to him; and, careful to acknowledge his presence by a smile, she required, in response, his ready bow. Her exactness was once subjected to a painful test. The following incident will illustrate it. When winter set in, the boys of the family became busy over their skates. There was a famous cutler in Newport,—by the name of Stevens, I think,—who manufactured the smooth iron or rather steel skate, in preference to the Russia hollow iron pattern. The finish was perfect, and the edge of exquisite sharpness, and hence most favorable for speed, and for elegant evolutions; and sometimes after a severe cold spell, all things being ready, and permission obtained, “Ho! Easton’s pond!” became the cry. Once upon a time, I recollect an event, connected with the skating mania,—and the reminiscence is as vivid to-day as when it occurred, sixty-seven years ago,—which involved two of the youngest boys in disgrace. A brother next to me in age proposed a visit to

the pond, one morning, at an earlier hour than usual, hoping to escape, "by hook or by crook," maternal eyes and ears, and the punishment consequent upon truancy. Our stealthy departure from the homestead, on that splendid morning, was indeed a narrow escape; and it was only because the mother's ear deceived her, and the unusual sound we made, she thought came from an opposite direction to the one we took. In less than half an hour, the two happy boys reached the pond. There were many boys and men, and one girl (beautiful as Hebe), already shooting off in every direction, emulous of success, in graceful gyrations. The pond, owing to the clear sunlight, presented an unbroken surface of crystal; and no one dreamt of an *air-hole*. My brother, in an effort to reach a goal, a marked stake, in order to cut off a competitor plunged into one of those openings in the ice; not having perceived the slightest difference between the surface of the ice and the water, there being no wind to ruffle the latter. He could swim a little, I knew; but young as I was, only ten years, I ran on my sharp runners immediately towards him, beckoning and cry-

ing with all my might for help. No one moved, as they feared the ice would be too tender in the neighborhood of the spot where my brother had broken through. It was the custom of the time to use a balance-pole to steady the body when skating. I had one of these, and I had enough presence of mind and fearlessness to make use of it. I stretched my body, small as it was, in such a manner as to divide the weight as much as possible over so frail a support; and by pushing the pole to the almost drowned boy, and holding it close to the ice, he was enabled to crawl up to the firmer stratum. Upon my brother's rescue, I persuaded him to give up an immediate return home, which he had proposed, and to go to the farmhouse, then owned by Mr. Nicholas Easton, close by. We received a warm welcome, being well known to the family. The almost drowned boy was supplied with warm garments, which, although much too large, sufficed for the emergency. It took the whole day to dry the lad's clothes; and it was not till a late hour that we reached home. I had agreed to tell the dreadful story of the hair-breadth escape of my poor brother. I

thought I should have a caress, if not a kiss; but, woe's me! such a withering look closed my lips, and dried the one big tear, and a voice unmistakably distinct pronounced the "To bed, to bed! cold and supperless to bed!" quenching the hope of forgiveness, and making our chamber an ice-chamber, and our bed a stone. We had broken our mother's injunctions.

One would have supposed, that, after such an experience, I should have shunned the water as a mad dog shuns it. But it was not possible for one born on an island, and one as beautiful as Rhode Island, and in a town memorable, in revolutionary annals, for a boundless love of liberty by a majority of the people, to be so subdued by domestic rule as to withstand the temptation to bathe in the limpid water which girdled that lovely island. Yet, notwithstanding the irrepressible attractions of the beach, — its glorious surf and majestic *marine* music, and the splendid diving at the wharves, — our good mother (and she really was a good mother, and loved us so well that she wished to save us from harm as long as she could by a strong arm and an iron will) issued this edict:

"No swimming henceforth will be allowed." Regardless of this command, I became an expert swimmer. The kind relative whose name I bear, found it out, and came to the wharf where the boys met at high tide, and encouraged us in our efforts to excel. It was the silver-money era; and my uncle, frequently during the summer season, would gladden the hearts of the lads by throwing into the deep water a silver dollar. Then came the sport. The water being perfectly clear, every object therein was plainly visible. It was a sight to witness, the boys on every projection of the wharf diving at just such an angle as to cut the water so sharply as to make no *splash*. The boy who happened to make the "belly-bumper" movement, as it was termed, was ejected from the circle. Jumping was not allowed. When the prize was seized, and the boys had resumed their clothes, the whole party would adjourn to a small beer and cake shop in Mary Street, and which is still standing, kept by an excellent colored woman, named Mareer, where the dollar was spent, and our benefactor cheered by the refreshed "scamps," as some of us were

called. My mother, not liking to relinquish her authority, and yet unwilling to leave it optional with me to tell a lie or speak the truth, did not say to me when I returned from school, during the summer months, "You have been swimming!" but she would call me to her, and, after receiving the respectful bow (then deemed the parent's right,) would run her hands hither and thither through the golden locks (now gray enough), to ascertain if they were dry or moist. If I had been careless about drying my hair, I was punished; otherwise, I escaped. Both parties *seemed* satisfied; for, if I was punished, I never whimpered.—N.B. One of my brothers was so docile as to be taught the art of swimming on a table, going through the motions, and seemingly as well satisfied as were the disobedient children with their actual aquatic exercises. But then *he* never had been dipped.

If there had been a phrenologist in my mother's day, he would have said that her bump of caution was largely developed. One day when I was amusing myself with some revolutionary relics left by my father, which were



lying in confusion on the garret-floor, my mother, suspecting that my busy fingers might lead to harm, asked from the stairs what I was doing. When I answered that I was playing with my father's gun, she said, very decidedly, "Let it alone." — "Why, mother," said I, "the gun has no lock on it." To this she answered, "I say, let it alone: it may go off, even if it has no lock on it." To this sage decision I made no other reply than by dropping the dangerous weapon upon the garret-floor.

Many years after, a phrenologist asked leave to examine my head. Though I had no faith in the science of which he was an adept, I consented, and was told that the bump of caution was wonderfully large. It brought to my mind my mother's warning voice over the gun affair, and almost in detail a great number of instances of caution on my own part,—such as being a timist from childhood; never neglecting an appointment; never entering, or alighting from, a car, when in motion; saving more than one boy from drowning; and catching many a child from under cart-wheels.

The most painful event in Newport, within

my recollection, was the death of a beloved relative, caused by the accidental explosion of a fowling-piece, upon the farm of Mr. Irish, on the Beach Road. The spot is still designated by suitable memorials.

Another violent death occurred near my mother's house. It was that of Mr. Myers, of Richmond, Va. He was riding, one dark evening, through a narrow pass at the north of our house, rendered exceedingly dangerous by its roughness, and which the town council wilfully neglected to repair; and, meeting some unseen obstacle, was thrown upon the sharp edge-stones or flagging, receiving an injury in his head, which, after a few days of acute suffering, terminated his life. He was buried according to Jewish custom; and hence the funeral took place early the evening following. I shall never forget the scene. It was in the midst of a thunder-storm, and by torchlight. All the male Jews of the town were present, and assisted at the ceremony, which mainly consisted in the nearest of kin filling the grave. The attendance of citizens, notwithstanding the tempest, was very large. At every flash of lightning, the ghastly pallor

on each countenance was fearfully strange to me. After this sad event, the grade of the passage was made safe. I often thought, in my school-days, upon the satirical saying, "Put a lock upon the barn-door after the horse is stolen," but never fully apprehended its meaning, until this catastrophe, and when the "fathers of the town" awoke to long-neglected duty.

AMUSEMENTS. — My playmates were quite numerous; not, perhaps, as select as is deemed necessary at the present day, but quite as respectable,—only less showy in externals. There was genuine heartiness in the juvenile exercises of my day, but which sometimes ran into excess, and demanded rebuke, if not discipline and correction. That the reader may see the marked difference between the variety of methods for promoting physical diversions when "we were young," and such as prevail at the present day, I will as briefly as possible narrate my own experiences and recollections.

Foot-races were deemed of primal importance. Although the word "athlete" may not have had place in *our* spelling-books or dictionaries, its

*meaning* found expression day by day. No definite distances were marked out; but the challenge, "Catch me, if you can," put every sinew and muscle in motion, and soon determined who were to be the successful runners in the schools. We had base-ball contests, but without the systematic terminology of the present day. Instead of such bats as are in common use now, a small, round, and sometimes gnarled stick, without any prominent head, constituted the club, and tested the skill of the combatants. I was reminded, a few years ago, of a similar play at Westborough, in Massachusetts, where the instrument was of the same ungainly shape, and where the fight was most admirably sustained, and the game in the end a drawn one. Pitching quoits was very common, both by young and old. It put in exercise the whole muscular frame. There were frequent trials of strength in the lifting of weights. I remember a young lad being challenged in this way; viz., a bet was offered that he could not lift from the floor three fifty-six-pound weights secured together by a cord. He accomplished it with apparent ease. I do not suppose Dr. Windship would consider it much

of an achievement at the present day ; and yet I would not advise young lads to try such a venture. I will instance another and more extraordinary physical effort, made by Mr. William V. Taylor, formerly an officer on board the Indian " Mount Hope," afterwards attached to the United-States navy. He was not stout, but very muscular. One day, on Gibbs's Wharf, hearing a wordy dispute about the lifting of weights just then accomplished by a lad, Mr. Taylor said sportively, " I can beat that." This was doubted. Mr. Taylor, " suiting the action to the word," took from the warehouse a twenty-eight-pound weight, which he raised on his little finger, and, after holding it at " arm's length," wrote with a piece of chalk, held between thumb and finger of the same hand, his initials, " W. V. T." I witnessed the feat, and joined with my comrades in pronouncing the young seaman the champion in muscular tactics. Besides the art of lifting, the leaping of ditches and the scaling of craggy mounds, &c., varied our youthful gymnastics.

There were no *regattas* in my day. Aquatic exercises were confined, for the most part, to the

sailing of a few full-rigged boats. What wonderful changes are witnessed in marine matters since that remote period! One may sit now for hours gazing without weariness, from various prominences in the harbor, upon beautiful nautical panoramas.

## CHAPTER III.

## SCHOOLS.

The school's lone porch, with reverend mosses gray,  
Just tells the pensive pilgrim where it lay.  
Mute is the bell that rung at peep of dawn,  
Quickening my truant feet across the lawn;  
Unheard the shout that rent the noontide air,  
When the slow dial gave a pause to care.  
Up springs, at every step, to claim a tear,  
Some little friendship formed and cherished here;  
And not the lightest leaf, but trembling teems  
With golden visions and romantic dreams!

*Pleasures of Memory.*

AS much of my boyhood was taken up in being *schooled*, and in school studies, this chapter will be devoted to an account of the primary and grammar schools, as they existed from 1794 to 1804. As this period embraces a variety of interesting incidents, in singular contrast with those happening at this present, I must be allowed great freedom in narrating them. It may be a mark of "second childhood," — this clinging to the past; and yet ere-long many of my readers will be old enough to sympathize

with it. My aim will be, mainly, to give simple sketches of my day and generation, which may have escaped the notice of earlier annalists, and which, I hope, will give pleasure to those who still live, and who have always lived, in Newport; and especially to those occupying localities once owned by men of the olden time, — men of wealth, of worth, and of intelligence, but “whose places shall know them no more.”

Very few persons, probably, who “have taken to Newport,” within a few years, as the American Brighton or “Baden-Baden,” have any knowledge of a prior occupation of the place, for a number of years, — not summers merely, but the year round, — by distinguished Southerners, who in great numbers, with their families, took up their abode in the “Eden of America” (so called by Doctor Jedediah Morse in his *wee, wee* geography); not wholly on account of the salubrity of the climate, or of its peculiar mildness compared with many places of the same latitude, but because of the private school kept there, — the most respectable establishment of the kind then existing in the States. In proof of the desirableness of this school, I need only add,



that, in order to facilitate intercourse between Southern cities and Newport, a very beautiful ship, called the "Rose-in-bloom," commanded by Mr. Burdick, a "Newport boy," was kept in constant sailing trim, freighted with Southern edibles, and fitted with elegant accommodations for passengers, the number of whom rendered the "Island Home" as lively, as fashionable, and perhaps more intellectually brilliant, than now. There was no attempt at outward display, no building of extravagant residences, and no costly equipages. The native population, being distinguished for their good sense and good-natured simplicity, proved eminently attractive to all well-disposed visitors. I remember the names of a few of the Southern notables of that day; the Marions, Gists, Smiths, Haynes, Alstons, Hamiltons, Flaggs, Rutledges, and Kinlocks, of South Carolina; Randolphs, Myers, and Lathams, of Virginia; &c., &c. Pardon this episode, and accompany me, if you will, to the primary school where I first commenced "the art of spelling and reading the English language with propriety."

The room occupied by the matron-teacher, Mrs. Sayre, and her daughter ("Miss Betsy," as

she was called), situated near the corner of Mary and Clarke Streets, was a low, square chamber on the second floor, having no furniture, no desks, nor chairs, excepting a few for teachers or visitors. The children, boys and girls (the former dressed the same as girls), were furnished by their parents with seats made of round blocks of wood, of various heights. These movable *seats*, at least thirty in number, would constitute as great a curiosity at this day of school accommodation and luxury, as would the old "ten-footer" district schoolhouses, were they set up for public gaze in one of our streets. Mrs. Sayre was a model teacher in her day. It was at the time of reading from Noah Webster's spelling and reading book, when an urchin, *alias* brat, sometimes softened into varlet, being pinned to the mistress's apron, was hammering or stuttering over a monosyllable, turning red and pale by turns as she jostled the poplar rod at her side, — it was just at that moment, when her eyes were bent on the sewing she was preparing for the girls, and on the garter-knitting for the boys, and she listening to and correcting the poor boy's mistakes, — it was just then that the block

gyrations commenced, not exactly as on a pivot, but in sweeps, forming larger or smaller circles according to the whim of the block-mover, — it was just at that moment of astounding commotion, when the old lady, taking notice of the tumult, raised the wand, viz. the poplar pole, and with distinct, nay, fearful articulation, cried out, in regular, syllabic order, “*Mi-rab-i-le-dictu*,” which Latin word sounded in my right ear very much like “My rabble dick you.” Of course, this, to us meaningless, word excited as much open-eyed and open-mouthed admiration as is produced by a grandiloquent orator. By the way, the poplar pole spoken of above was a very popular tree in my day. The planting of it became a kind of passion, and its offshoots sold readily at twenty-five cents apiece. It was introduced into Newport, and largely cultivated, by Mr. William Tilley, the patriarch of the Tilley family, always held in great esteem. If my memory is not at fault, Deacon Tilley hired of the Trinity-Church Corporation the ten-acre lot, now a portion of Kay Street, on part of which stood the Trinity-church House, so called, occupied, when I was a boy, by Mrs. Pollock, a lady

from the South. It was on this lot that Mr. Tilley raised this tall unsightly tree, ugly from its very leanness. A few of its ghostly trunks and straight, stiff branches may yet be occasionally met with in our suburban towns. I have spoken, casually, of my wearing frocks or "slips." I remember the fabric was English calico, of a uniform groundwork, either dotted, or sprigged with fanciful figures. It was an economical age when I *figured*; and it was not uncommon for the gown of the grandmother to descend as an heirloom to the grandchildren. There were nine children in our family; and when the frock of my eldest sister reached me, a boy of five years of age, it was almost threadbare, and past fading. Boys were thus kept in frocks, that they might be profitable beneficiaries of what would otherwise have fallen into the rag-bag.

Quite near our juvenile schoolrooms, there lived a very worthy colored woman, named "Violet," who kept exposed in a window-frame a few specimens of cake and candy, rendered very attractive by the neat and tasteful way in which they were arranged. A few of us urchins were furnished now and then with a

few coppers; and hence followed early trading propensities, with "Violet" for instance. Other boys there were less favored with means for procuring similar gratifications, and they could only look wistfully at the sweets. The good-natured, kind-hearted woman was not slow in discovering the reason for this self-denial; and so on one day when the fortunate ones had retired, and the unfortunates still lingered, she bid them go round the house, and then gave to each a copper, telling them they could now buy candy for themselves if they pleased. They soon found their way back, shouting to the old woman, "A stick of candy, Violet!" and were supplied as promptly as would have been the best paying customers.

Violet, whilst evidently intending to keep up the appearance of doing a *regular* business, practically repudiated the worldly apothegm, "There's no friendship in trade."

To return to Mrs. Sayre's primary school: I recollect very well the disagreeable sensations connected with the "dark closet," the prison of the disobedient. It was not resorted to, save in extreme cases. I remember what a fright

was caused by one of the boys swallowing a marble (he is still alive), which led to a sudden dismissal of the school. At the close of the school on Friday afternoons, we were sent to a vacant room below stairs, where we recited the "commandments," repeated the "Lord's Prayer," and received commendation or censure according to our good or bad conduct during the week. I remember most gratefully the happy influence of Mrs. Sayre's discipline and instruction. She was firm but gentle in manner and speech, governing by signs rather than by words. My preparation was excellent for the higher school I was soon to enter, especially in reading and spelling. The junior teacher (Miss Betsy) had under her care children of advanced standing. She was an excellent teacher, and was affectionately remembered for her assiduity in behalf of her scholars. During the recess twice a week, Mrs. Sayre taught colored children spelling and reading, gratis. This good lady and her daughter were greatly respected and beloved. The latter married Joseph Rogers, Esq., of Philadelphia.

The first schoolhouse of any note in the

town was owned and managed by a gentleman of acknowledged ability for those days. Compared with buildings used for similar purposes now, it was a mere shanty, a "ten-footer." It was scant in length, breadth, and height, and poorly ventilated. The furniture, viz. the desks and benches, was of the most ordinary stamp. The former, used for the writing exercises, had leaden inkstands in the centre; and their surface was more or less disfigured with rude indentures, so as to render straight or curved strokes with the pen next to impossible; and the latter, the benches without backs, were so tall and shaky as to be very uncomfortable, especially to the shortest boys, whose legs had to be suspended, causing often extreme pain, and consequent disturbance; bringing on them undeserved punishment from the monitors, unless warded off by a bribe, in the shape of a top or a knife, or a handful of marbles. On the *rostrum* were two or three chairs for distinguished visitors, and a small desk for the master, on which *reposed*, not often, a punctured ferule, surmounted by an unpleasant-looking cowskin. So exceedingly disagreeable were the daily min-

istrations of these instruments of *instruction*, that every method was adopted for their destruction. But the master was more than a match for our organ of destructiveness. Such was school No. 1 in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. It certainly was not the prototype of the school at Rugby, where Dr. Arnold ruled successfully, without making any of the distinguishing *marks* which characterized my pupilage. As the school grew, assistants were employed. Mr. Maxy was an excellent teacher of the languages. Mr. Taylor (a most worthy citizen) taught the lower branches. The tree is known by its fruit: whilst, therefore, it must be granted that the greater number of the scholars were of the genus Booby, there were some of rare brightness of mind, whose intellectual culture did credit to those efficient and faithful teachers.

Our schoolroom had to be swept and dusted twice or thrice a week, and the classés were obliged to do this in turn. As this was a disagreeable task, those boys who had money (and these were generally of Southern parentage) could easily buy substitutes from among the poorer



boys. During my nonage, the Puritan spirit did not die out. It was an age of force. Punishment was deemed necessary. Exhibitions of authority constituted, day by day, a series of domestic *tableaux*. The discipline of the school was in accordance with the government of the home. It was arbitrary, with rare exceptions, in the extreme. Children were required to bow or kiss the hand, when entering or leaving either home or school. The school to which I was sent differed in no respect from inferior ones in the matter of corporal punishment. The ferule and cowskin were almost deified. Apologies increased, rather than abated, the swellings of the hand, and the wales upon the back. An appeal to parents was of no more avail than beating the air. This severe discipline was not interfered with by the clergy; for, in their day, *they* had to run the gauntlet; and as the men, and even the boys, of that age were notoriously addicted to swearing, drinking, gambling, and other vices, it was deemed necessary to subdue these evils by blows. No faith existed then in behalf of moral suasion. It is delightful to remember that none of my name, as boys, at least, were guilty of uttering an oath.

The only classical school in Newport, strictly speaking, during my pupilage, was kept in New Church Lane, by Mr. John Frazer, a Scotchman. He was a good teacher, especially in Greek, Latin, and mathematics. Mr. Frazer lived near a brother Scotchman, a snuff-manufacturer: his house was at the corner of the same street (Church) as Frazer's, and was afterwards occupied by Dr. William Turner. Ferguson was the most noted blasphemer in the town, and exasperated us boys by his abusive language when passing his shop. We finally proposed entertaining him with a musical play upon his name, which was Adam Ferguson. One day we took our seat upon a flat board, nailed upon the top of the posts of the fence of Trinity Churchyard, keeping time to the music with vibrations from the heels of our shoes, whilst we sang, in syllabic order, his name, — Adam Ferguson. It was not long before he heard our provoking retaliation of his oft-repeated insults; and he appeared, ready to pour his curses and his blows on our devoted heads. But we not only escaped them then, but were never troubled with them afterwards.

Mr. Clarke Rodman (*a Friend*) had, in his own house in Mary Street, quite a large school, devoted to the education of a class of boys and young men living at the South End, who were styled the "roughs." It was thought singular, that a man belonging to the "Society of Friends," a non-resistant by profession, should have attracted to his school so many disorderly youths. But, though avowedly a non-resistant, he never suffered any act of disobedience to go unpunished. His manner of conducting the spelling was original. The word being given out, followed by a blow from a strap on his desk, the whole class, simultaneously, would bellow out the word, — say the word "multiplication," — properly divided. His ear was so true, that he easily detected any misspelling. When this happened, he would demand the name of the scholar who had failed: if there was any hesitancy in giving the name, the whole class, instead of being dismissed, — spelling being the last exercise, — was detained, until, by repeated trials, accuracy was obtained. So many voices upon a single word, in so many keys, produced an amusing jingle, which invariably attracted to

the spot all passers-by. A Mr. Knox, with remarkably long feet and an ungainly appearance, devoted most of his time to teaching very poor children their A B C, in a small building in the rear of Trinity Church.

Having given the reader a brief but accurate statement of the schools in Newport during my boyhood, I will give, in the next place, my recollections of some of the school-books then used. The advanced scholars in our school studied the Greek and Latin text-books of the day. The principal English books were Murray's Grammar, Noah Webster's Spelling-book, the Columbian Orator, Woodbridge's Dictionary, Daboll's, Pike's, and Walsh's Arithmetics, and Morse's small Geography.

Upon my *début* at this *well-appointed seminary*, I received, as an elementary help in the English branches, a much-abused, dog's-eared spelling-book, by the celebrated Noah Webster. It had for a frontispiece the outlines of a man's head, of which the groundwork was a dismal blur. I was so ashamed of this "way to learning," that I petitioned somebody to give me a pistareen (twenty cents), in possession of which

I felt so rich — richer than I have ever felt since — and so grand, that I hastened to Mr. Jabez (then called *Jaby*) Dennison's book and stationery store, and purchased a fresh-bound, blue-paper-covered "Webster." I turned over my treasure, examined its exterior, and then allowed myself a glance at its pictorial embellishments. I saw the old man looking wistfully at his partially stripped apple-tree, and at the urchin, whose courage laughed to scorn the old man's first argument, a handful of earth, but who shrunk from the well-aimed missiles that proved to him that there was some virtue in stones. After this interview, I ventured to hope that the author of the book had taken compassion upon his juvenile readers and students, and had ornamented his titlepage with a fresh engraving of his noble self. But no: the same *doleful* counterfeit presentment of a man came in sight; and so provoked did I feel, that I took the book, the day after I had purchased it, back to Mr. Dennison, and asked him to return me the money, which he consented to do. Passing from his store, I was attracted by a pleasant display of fruit and cake at Mrs. Hammatt's shop, in Spring

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Street. The shop still remains, with the window-bar across, as it met my longing eye seventy years ago. I could not resist purchasing a few coppers' worth of the sweets. In some way, to me very strange, Mr. Dennison discovered my second purchase, and, being a man of some humor, followed me very stealthily to the school; and after all were seated excepting the master, and the Bible had been read, as was the custom, by one of the scholars (unless it happened to be Paul's defence before Agrippa, which the master thought no one could read properly but himself), just when the scholars were about to resume their studies, Mr. Dennison presented himself to the master, and, with one of his most winning smiles, said to him, "Sir, I have ventured to trespass upon school hours, because of the immense success which I feel sure has resulted from your efforts in teaching; for information has just reached me, that one of your pupils has so keen an appetite for knowledge, that he has eaten his spelling-book." So curious a revelation could not be hushed up. The scholars, and some outsiders, tried hard to discover the possessor of so sharp a taste for

learning; but the enigma was not solved. Here it will be appropriate for me to introduce another fact relating to the Webster Spelling-book. William Cobbett, a renowned satirist of the day, published, in one of his political essays, a last will and testament, which contains the following item:—

“I give and bequeath to Noah Webster the sum of fifteen Spanish milled dollars, to enable him, the said Noah, to procure a new engraved likeness of himself for his Spelling-book, that children may no longer be frightened from their studies; with this special proviso, that he omits the usual *addendum* of Esq. from his name.”

The title of “schoolmaster,” in the days to which these papers refer, carried great weight with it. His opinion, as when Goldsmith wrote the “Deserted Village,” stood for law and gospel. It was rumored, that a boy who was a great favorite, and who had left the primary school with singular distinction, had been called by his new teacher “a fool.” The lad, who was very gentle, bore the reproach with rare composure, confident of being able at no distant day to change the opinion of his new master. A

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member (not a relative) of the lad's family, hearing how his pet had been treated, accosted him with "Well, my boy, he says you are a fool : now let us put the fool's-cap on the maligner's head. Just bring your books, and recite to me, for half an hour a day, for a few weeks, and I will show you how to put the boot on the other leg. All that you need, my boy, is to be less bashful ; to stand up like a man, fearing nothing but sin ; and you will very soon see master and classmates changing their tune,—you becoming the judge, and they the complaisant solicitors." In less than a quarter of the time named, as the story runs, the "fool" held the reins in his hand, and, at the early age of fourteen, entered Harvard College, whence he graduated the first of his class, having the English oration, and held, for the fifty years preceding his death, the most distinguished position as philanthropist and divine. Some of the best scholars in our school were "mealy-mouthed : " they did not dare to say "their souls were their own." Their timidity was frequently held to be sheer stubbornness ; and one boy from the South was afraid to look the teacher in the face,



and became so cowed as to lose all pluck, and yet he was not lacking in intellectual power.

It is a great pleasure to me that I can remember clearly, and with ease draw an accurate plan of, the schoolroom where I was educated, and recall the face and form of most of the scholars who occupied seats therein. It may gratify some of my readers to have their names written out by one who studied and played with them. It certainly will be acceptable to the few survivors of my fellow-students to enter with me the chamber of memory, and review our old lessons, and fight over again our old intellectual battles.

The pupils, many of whom were entitled "foreigners," having been born at the South, and with whom I was intimate, were—James Hamilton, who at middle age became an active politician (he was remarkable for his beauty); States Gist, a fine fellow, who died in Newport, lamented by young and old, and was buried in the common burial-ground; Robert and William Smith (sons of Bishop Smith), both educated at Harvard College; Messrs. Haynes,

Shubrick, Kinlocks, Rutledge, Washington and William Alston, Henry Flagg, afterward Mayor of New Haven; Simmonds, Daniel Latham, —all of South Carolina: Francis Marion, of Georgia; Randolph, Moore, Smythe, Marshall, Mathews, of Virginia; and Gyles and John Mardenborough, from the West Indies.

The Newport boys, in 1799, were S. O. Auchmuty, William Vernon, two Phillipses, George S. Rathbone, R. Partlow, Wickham, Wood, Benjamin and Grant Mason, Edward Littlefield, James Stevens, Robert Newman, George W. Ellery, George Whitehorne, Benjamin Pierce, Timothy Pierce, Tilley, Tew, William W. Russel, Lawton, Francis Brinley Fogg, John Easton, Hazards, Lee, Peckham, Wilbur Eddy, William C. Gibbs, Charles King, Sandford, Cozzens (late of West Point), William Cozzens, Davenport, Goddard, Hammet, Harkness, John Stevens, Robert Stevens, B. B. Mumford, Carrs, Melville, David Oliphant, Nason, Callender, Talman, Trevitt, Cranston, Sherman, Howland, R. Coggeshall, Godfrey, Levitt, Saunders, Malbone, Breeze, Underwood, Tanner, Bannister, Thurston, Edward Senter, Partlow, Fowlers,

Gardners, Clarkes, Potters, Mayberry, Bull, Hunter, Buffum, Dennis, Tillinghast, Greene, G. Wanton, Vaughn, Barbour, Collins, Spooner, Oxx, Richmond, Yeomans, Townsend, Bush, Kane, Sayre, Waring, Earl, Ailman, Seattle, &c.

Enough, it may be said, of the names of my schoolmates. There were other worthy lads from the island, and many from the neighboring towns; but "*too much* of a good thing is very bad," and so I forbear.

There were no attempts at intellectual progress outside of the schools, save the formation of a literary club, called the "Social Union," composed of young men, mostly graduates of the academy. A considerable number of books were collected, newspapers were taken, written addresses were made, debates were sustained, and once a year a supper was enjoyed, provided by one of the noted cooks of the day. The room occupied by the society was formerly the office of my late father, William Channing. Amongst those who took part in the debates, the late Henry Y. Cranston, of Newport, was pre-eminently the peer. He was uniformly kind,

courteous, and scrupulously considerate, when measuring swords with more feeble competitors, of whom I acknowledge myself to have been one.

Eloise Payne, the daughter of Schoolmaster Payne (a teacher of great celebrity in his day, in Boston, Mass.), and sister of John Howard Payne (the renowned dramatist and poet), came to Newport about the year 1807-8, and opened one of the most noticeable schools in America; and, until her health failed, she exerted a great influence for good in the moral and intellectual culture of girls,—not only the residents of Newport, but also of many from New York and Boston, who boarded in Miss Payne's family. Perhaps no young lady-teacher ever enjoyed more deserved repute than Miss Payne. Her voice was delightfully sweet and winning. Her face was the index of unusual intellectual power. Her eye, lustrous and penetrating when she spoke, awakened confidence and love when she was silent. Her skill in penmanship was admirable. She attracted many, and held them spell-bound by her grace in conversation. Her religious faith yielded the fruit of holy living; so that,

though her life was short, her death was deeply lamented. I have frequently been gratified by the expression of affectionate remembrance of this faithful teacher by the few pupils who still survive to call her blessed.

## CHAPTER IV.

## A VACATION.

“Let thy recreations be ingenious, and bear proportion with thine age. If thou sayest with Paul, ‘When I was a child, I did as a child,’ say also with him, ‘But, when I was a man, I put away childish things.’ — ‘Wear also the child’s coat, if thou usest his sports.’”

WHILST many hours of each day were devoted to school studies, a good portion of three years was spent in useful employments about home. At times I cherished longings for rural pursuits. We owned considerable land in near neighborhood of the homestead; and, by judicious culture, its products in cereals, hay, and fruit constituted most important items in the domestic economy.

The farmers on the island were even then noted for their skill; and their steady advance for half a century in husbandry has elicited from strangers visiting Newport unqualified commendation. The only danger now to be apprehended lies in the temptation to sell

estates near the city for ornamental rather than productive purposes.

During my pupilage, the thought was never entertained, that such a quiet, staid place as Newport, so rigidly attached to customs and laws of "Mede-and-Persian"-like conservatism, could ever change into what is now a gay and fashionable watering-place.

My early taste for agriculture, already referred to, lasted through my academic life, but was overruled by parental authority, as soon as I was offered a lucrative mercantile position, which was accepted and entered upon, as a matter of course.

My walk from our homestead, now in the occupancy of Mrs. Gyles, opposite the Episcopal Church Schoolhouse, were up by Mr. Brinley's rope-walk to the Easton farm on the east, to the Irish farm on the west, then by a short turn down a most precipitous road, to the Beach. Owing to the steepness (which might have been easily graded to the present slope, had the fathers of the town been wise enough to provide against the extravagant waste of horse-flesh), all the sand needed for domestic and manufacturing

purposes had to be carted by small quantities up the bluff, until a full cart-load was obtained. Crossing the first beach, I always lingered about the celebrated fissure, called Purgatory, and would sometimes venture to look down the fearful cleft. At one of my visits, I heard of a gentleman who bore the name of Meriam, minister of Trinity Church, who had ventured to leap across it, losing his hat for his pains. This was deemed a great feat at the time. One of my elder brothers once crept and slid down the embankment to the opening of the gulf, and then swam through the deep water, which every high tide pours into it. Afterwards, by extraordinary skill, as it seemed to me, he retraced the slippery steps, and alighted upon the grassy mound. From Purgatory, I pushed on to the "Hanging Rocks," fabled to be movable, near to the second beach, and stopped for a cup of milk at the Gardner farm, which was in the neighborhood. Hereabouts were caught by Mr. Young, a celebrated Newport fisherman, the bass and tautog, and now and then a "sheep's head" (finer in flavor than the English turbot) so famous in the island's history. The Manhaden fishery, in



August, for oil and manure, was vastly attractive sport to the boys, who, for their tiny pulls at the seine, were permitted to carry home as many of the finny tribe as they were able. Another of my excursions was to "Green End," to the Honeyman farm, and to the pleasant residence of Elder Bliss. He belonged to a sect styled "Seventh-day Baptists." He was patriarchal in manner and costume; was highly respected, but very eccentric at times. I heard him preach one very hot Sunday in July, for Dr. Pattin, in his shirt-sleeves, provoking many smiles. When the wind blew a tempest from the south-east, and the sound of the breakers was heard in the town, I hastened to "Hog Hole;" a sight worth seeing when I was a boy, with its secret, winding paths to the natural rocky amphitheatre, studded, as it seemed, with superb agates, emeralds, and diamonds. I never heard the legend that gave it its name. Perhaps there was none. From the headland close by was and is still a magnificent view of the Southern "offing." In the winter, the water round the beach is marvellously warm, owing to the mingling of the Southern Gulf-stream with the Northern Ocean.

Another, and more charming walk still, was to "Brenton's Neck." It derived its name from Jahleel Brenton, who, in the early history of the colony, became its possessor. His name stands first on the Record of the Artillery Company of the Town of Newport, incorporated in 1741. There were, during my boyhood, several shipwrecks at this neck of land, where there were formidable rocks, near to what was known afterwards as the Collins farm. Whenever the tidings of such disasters reached the town, a stream of people would set towards the scene. The last one which I witnessed was that of a brig from Russia, loaded with hemp and iron. It was a strange sight, — the rail-fences in every direction covered with the hemp rescued from the wreck, and exposed to the air before being stored. I frequently strayed into the adjoining district of Fort Adams, then unfinished. From thence I looked at Beaver-tail Light and towards Point Judith. I never was so happy as when within hearing of the surf. Saturday afternoons, in pleasant weather, were generally given to excursions to "Malbone's Garden," to "Miantonomy Hill," and to the "Block House," which

surmounted it. Although these localities had become wastes, still the ruins of the famous mansion, were peopled to my imagination, which was already kindled by frequent stories of the almost regal position of the owner of the estate, and of his sumptuous feasts,—in the preparation of the last of which, the elegant mansion was destroyed.

One of my recreations was to ring the evening bell of old Trinity. The sexton, Mr. Uriah Gordon, became so satisfied with my expertness in ringing, that he trusted me with the keys of the gate and the church porch. I was vain enough to believe, that no one but myself could, with so few pulls at the rope, “SET” the bell, and bring out its loudest tones. It was not very pleasant, I confess, walking among the graves; and it tried my courage, as I was only a lad, to lay the ghosts which fear set in my path.

It is fit, having described the scenes of my childhood and the incidents of my school life, to appropriate a chapter to churches and ministers.

## CHAPTER V.

## MEETING-HOUSES, CHURCHES, MINISTERS.

“There stands the messenger of truth. There stands  
The legate of the skies. His theme divine,  
His office sacred, his credentials clear.  
By him the violated law speaks out  
Its thunders; and by him, in strains as sweet  
As angels use, the gospel whispers peace.”

WHEN I was young, it was considered by Congregationalists, Baptists, &c., a concession to Romanism to call places of worship “churches.” I had supposed, after a long absence from Newport, that, on my return to old scenes, I should hardly find Puritan prejudices still in full force. It was ordered, however, that I should be disappointed. Being desirous of examining the church where I received my earliest religious impressions, — viz., the Second Congregational, under the pastoral care of Rev. William Pattin, the successor of Rev. Ezra Stiles, of Connecticut, — I called at a house in Clarke Street, where the old sanctuary still remained, and asked of an old lady to lend me the keys of the CHURCH. I

was answered, with some appearance of ill feeling, that *they* were not the keepers of *church* keys. Upon this announcement, I expressed some regret, as I wished very much to sit once more in the old pew where I had listened for so many years to Mr. Pattin's exhortations. "Oh!" I received for answer, "we have the MEETING-HOUSE keys: we have nothing to do with ZION CHURCH." The keys were withheld until I repeated "meeting-house," when my wish was granted.

Reader, please accompany me to the place where in my boyhood, instead of drinking the simple and pure milk of the word, I was fed on strong meat, exceedingly *dry* and hard of digestion; and hence I became morally dyspeptic. Of this I was not aware, until healthier spiritual food revealed my almost chronic disease of hardness of heart. It was not because of any thing peculiar in the views presented by the pastor; for, at the time, the then accredited doctrines of Christianity were, with a few exceptions, one and the same in all the churches; but because of my teacher's abstruse way of stating his religious convictions. The church, or, more prop-

erly speaking, the meeting-house, lacking in every thing deserving the name of architectural order, proportion, or convenience, without form or comeliness, was cold as the north pole in winter, and at fever-heat in summer. The windows, which clattered violently when there was any wind, and which a few coppers' worth of wood would have choked into silence, constituted the bassoon accompaniment to Mr. Yeoman's pitch-pipe in the choir. Fire was deemed an element utterly irreconcilable with devotion in our meeting-house. With the thermometer at zero, how could the minister, by no means a warm-blooded man, be expected to inflame the souls of his hearers with spiritual caloric? In the coldest weather, he was muffled to the chin. The softer sex had foot-stoves; but the live coals in these, when kindled at home, were nearly *dead* before being placed at the head of the pew. The boys, poor fellows! were to be pitied, in their well-worn short jackets, and thin overcoats, hardly reaching to their knees, with trousers, but no drawers (an article almost unknown), with very short socks, and shoes of poor leather, porous enough to absorb the snow and rain. Boots

were a great luxury, and India-rubbers were unheard of.

The singing, notwithstanding the pains taken to instruct in the art, was execrable, although I took part in it! At one time, the choir did what choirs are apt to do, — went off in a huff. *Discord* ran riot the next Sunday. The scene was at the same time ludicrous and painful. Four of the congregation, with the leader already referred to, volunteered as a *quintette* to “carry the singing.” There were two bass voices, one tenor, and two treble. If they had started, and kept together to the end of each verse, the music might have been pleasing. But no: they had been in the habit of singing Lenox, Worcester, Bridgewater, and a hundred other *fugue* tunes, in which one part runs a race after another, fearful of not winding up together on the last syllable. But the most disagreeable feature of the performance was the thinness of the tones, owing to the singers sitting in their separate pews, which happened to be at the cardinal points of the compass.

It was common for many who did not relish the minister’s dry, expository lectures upon the

Old Testament, to send to the sexton, Tunbridge Stevens, for information on Sunday mornings. The answer was always concise: "Expounds in the morning; preaches in the afternoon;" or *vice versa*.

Our minister of the Clarke-street Church was unpretending and courteous. He was a good classical scholar, and educated several young men from the South, one of whom lived for a time in his family. He forbore using illustrations or exhortatory appeals. He delighted in tying hard, metaphysical knots. He never diverged a moment towards the sensational. Whilst an acknowledged believer in Calvinism, he seldom felt obliged to broach the peculiarities of that faith; for only in the instance of the Murray doctrines had he an adversary.

Sunday was the least agreeable day of the week. Children were not allowed to see, hear, or talk about any thing that was bright, sunny, and cheerful. The texts, however long, must be remembered and repeated, a hymn memorized, (I can remember very many at this late period) a designated seat occupied; and thus the tiny, flexible frame of the boy was kept



in durance until the canonical hour (sunset) was reached. The minister brought with him to Newport a Connecticut custom, of commencing the sabbath at sundown on Saturday, and closing it at sunset on Sunday, when the reading of secular books, and ordinary week-day work, were allowable. There were no "exchanges" between the ministers of the town in my day. Baptists had no fellowship with Congregationalists, because of their unbelief in the validity of infant baptism. Episcopalians had no sympathy with those who denied Church government by bishops; and even Dr. Hopkins and Mr. Pattin had their theological differences, which, for a time at least, prevented church-fellowship. It would seem, however, from the removal of the old Clarke-street bell, with its clanging, discordant sounds, to the new Congregational church in Spring Street, that all past variances had become *harmonized*.

Fast-days were observed by the Congregational churches of Rhode Island, and by them only. It was a day not recognized by the State government, but was observed by the churches just named, in consequence of the example set

by Massachusetts, whose reverence for the customs of the Pilgrims kept the day even more outwardly sacred than the sabbath; hence the proclamation of the Bay State was read by the Congregational Rhode-Island ministers.

Thanksgiving Day was appointed by the State authorities in a series of resolutions, which the Governor of the State was *requested* to make known; thus relieving his Excellency from a co-equal participation in the matter. The people always seemed jealous of the exercise of any authority by the executive department of the State. Whilst, therefore, every other of the New-England States was summoned annually by the Governor and Council to keep Thanksgiving Day, the "chief" of "little Rhody" was only permitted to express meekly, by the seal of the State, the will of the representatives.

A curious custom, how introduced I know not, existed among the men of our society, with few exceptions, on the Lord's Day, during the summer season. At the main entrance of the church, there was a grass-plot, which was occupied by the "heads" of the *religious* families, for conversation, (perhaps about trade, &c., who

knows ?) until the introductory prayer had been offered ; when, with one consent, the outsiders would enter, and make their way through the broad and side aisles, wholly unaware, apparently, of having caused any disturbance. As these were the “ lords of creation,” and held the purse-strings of the parish, the minister knew too well how ineffectual his feeble voice would prove in rebuking a long-established custom, or in offering any remonstrance to this weekly annoyance. It remained, therefore, for my grandfather, Hon. William Ellery, the oldest member of the society, to give these offenders a subtle rebuke. One very pleasant Sunday morning, as he entered the yard, the gentlemen in attendance opening to the right and left, lifting their hats, as was their wont, Mr. Ellery said to them, in his blandest tone, “ Gentlemen, I perceive that you do not like short prayers.” They simultaneously replied, “ Oh, yes ! we prefer such.” — “ Well,” replied my grandfather, “ I cannot understand how that can be, when you never come in *in time to hear one.*” The effect of these few words was magical : there was no further disturbance.

The Clarke-street Society was, in its golden days, as well attended, by an intelligent, wealthy, and exemplary society, as any in the town.

During the sessions of courts of law, and of the Legislature, very many of the judges, barristers, and political experts, were to be seen in our homely place of worship. A few years later, there was, numerically speaking, a great falling-off. Many of its aged men and women, the pillars of the society, had died; and very many of the younger ones, aspiring to something more promising than home toil, were eager, at the first opening, to seek their fortunes abroad. Thus, by the withdrawal of so many from active co-operation in church matters, means for the support of the ministry were constantly diminishing, and gradually prepared the way for the minister's departure. In time, the church-members became reduced to a few faithful women, who appointed one of their number, at communion seasons, as deaconess, to receive from the minister's hands the sacred emblems, and present them to the communicants.

I will here insert a reminiscence which had

escaped me in its proper place. It was customary in the Second Congregational Church to hold, once a month, a lecture, preparatory to the season of communion. It was seldom that the attendance upon these occasions exceeded the usual church-members. Shortly after the late Dr. Channing received ecclesiastical authority to preach as a candidate, being on a visit to Newport, he was invited to deliver the lecture. It was soon noised about; and, being a great favorite in the town, an audience greeted him, such as had never before assembled on a similar occasion; and they listened with evident interest to the sermon, said to be his first, from the text, Acts iii. 6: "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee." It aimed, by its fervor, earnestness, and practical bearing, to enlist the sympathy of his hearers in behalf of true Christian charity.

I recollect the minister's catechetical exercises at his house in behalf of the children of his flock. He asked questions from the only question-book extant:\* and whether they were *unanswerable*

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\* Westminster Catechism.

I am not able to say ; but it is very certain, that except in a single instance, when my brother, the late E. T. Channing, responded, the catechist was compelled to read for our edification both question and answer.

The good minister was often called to visit the sick and dying, and to baptize infants when sickness or any other cause rendered it necessary to perform the rite at home. When sent for at a late hour of the night, his constitutional timidity obliged him to seek companionship. I was a boarder in his family, and, although young (between fifteen and sixteen years of age), was known to be fearless : so I was frequently roused from my sound sleep to accompany him on his errands of mercy ; but though I tried to appear unconscious of his numerous shakings and affectionate appeals, yet he always triumphed. On one of those occasions, an infant, the daughter of a parishioner in Broad Street, was thought to be dying with scarlet fever. The minister knew that Mrs. Pollock had, for this disease, a remedy which had proved efficacious at the South : so wishing, if possible, to save the child, he ventured to call at Mrs. Pollock's house at

the unseasonable hour of ðne in the morning. It was very chilly ; and it was not until several blows on the door with the “knocker” that there was any response. The old lady, at first very indignant at the fright we had occasioned her, and at the certain death which she prophesied would follow her exposure to the night-air, so far relented as to give the recipe *viva voce*, with which we departed,—the pastor full of hope of being an instrument in God’s hand for the recovery of the child ; and I, in my ignorance, not a little perplexed (under the information we had received of the critical condition of the infant) by his large faith and benevolence. When we reached the house, we found the child was so near death, that the rite of baptism must be hastened, which was too impressively administered ever to be forgotten by me. The scene is as vividly present at this moment as it was then, sixty-five years ago. Such stillness, such sweet blending of the voice of prayer with the heaven-absorbed breathings of the child, were enough to have melted a stoic’s heart.

Another of my night excursions with our minister was as follows :. The good man was sum-

moned again to console a family, because its "head" was missing, or, as the messenger said, "was lost." It was so dark when we got into the street that I meekly suggested, "Our *dip*t candle will hardly last for a long search of Mr. ——." The minister answered encouragingly, and we soon reached the desolate dwelling. The wife, who had never been separated before from her husband, and having anxiously waited for his return until midnight, could think of no one but her minister to whom she could turn for help. I faintly asked where Mr. —— had dined. The place was named, — Clarke Street, the very street where we lived. I, boy-like, dashed off, and soon had the knocker in my hand, by the help of which I brought some one to the window, from whom I learned that the lost man was safe in bed. I ran back with the tidings; and not many days after it was revealed to me, that the delinquent, usually a temperance man, had been allured to a dinner-party, and in due time was rendered incapable of returning to his home. The circumstances revived in my mind a wise saying of a prophetess of that day, "It is always best for the head of a family to be at



home before dark, or certainly before the nine-o'clock bell rings, *unless his wife is with him.*"

CONFERENCE MEETINGS.—The first of these which I attended, was held once a fortnight in a hall owned by Mrs. Penrose, situated at the lower end of Church Street, or New-church Lane,—I cannot remember which. Besides the devotional exercises, questions in writing, suggested from Bible readings, were proposed to the minister of the Second Church, who was constituted the leader; and answers to them were rendered at the next session of the conference.

These meetings excited great curiosity at the time. They were novel, and viewed by some as an unjustifiable departure from ancient canonical rules. Very many texts, hard to find by the less knowing ones, caused them to be very anxious to learn their significance. At any rate, the Bible became a hand-book in my day. There were occasional meetings at the pastor's house. I recollect accompanying my mother to them. I was quite a go-to-meeting lad. I delighted in attending those held by the "New

Lights," when religious experiences were defined by the converts. The Indians from Naragansett were frequently present. The church where these meetings were held is still standing,—opposite, I believe, the dwelling-house of the late Dr. Hopkins.

Before taking leave of our meeting-house and its worthy pastor, I will give an account of my last visit to it, a few years before it was remodelled, almost rebuilt, for the use of a Baptist society. I found it in a most dilapidated state. There still remained in the ceiling the hole made by the unlucky tread of one of my small playmates, and which had been such an eyesore to our minister as to elicit from him sermon after sermon upon the wonderful beauty and grandeur of Solomon's temple, with allusions to the conventicle of the Covenanters and the primitive cabin of the Pilgrims, none of whom, he believed, would have allowed such a blemish to remain (pointing to it) in the place consecrated to the worship of God. Being once more in the church of my childhood, I began gazing above and below, and proceeded to look in at each pew. On the right hand of the

broad aisle, at the top, I saw, by the help of a vivid imagination, my old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Champlin; on the left hand opposite was Mr. Samuel Vernon's pew (always well filled); next in the rear was that of Mr. Benjamin Pierce; and next behind was the spot occupied by my parents and their children. In our *once* well-filled pew I sat down, and looked up at the most forlorn pulpit imaginable, and as it were at the man to whom I did not listen very carefully from the age of three and one-half to twenty-one years. I felt bewildered by the ghosts of the men and women which started up in every pew and in the galleries,—the men, in coats of many colors, small-clothes, knee-buckles, silk, thread, and woolen stockings, shoes with buckles steel and plated, high-top boots, cocked hats, and wigs of every shape and hue; the women, in huge, sharp-pointed bonnets, well-starched stomachers, close-fitting gowns, wide belts, many gold beads, hoop ear-rings, and with gloves manufactured at "the Point," from sheep-skin, generally colored blue;—I indeed felt bewildered. I know not how long I sat musing: but at last the fire burned, and from the front gal-

lery the thunder-and-lightning music broke forth, and the before-dead worshippers (many with silver-headed canes in hand), uprose and wheeled to face, as well as to hear, the *sweet* music; and there I once more beheld the chorister, Mr. Yeomans, my earliest musical teacher and well-tryed friend; and oh, when the frisky tune of "Ocean" burst forth, how I felt myself choking with delight, and straining every nerve, mental and physical, to join in the closing refrain! When I settled down in my old seat, there seemed to arise before me my old spiritual teacher, with bands, cassock, gown, silk gloves out at the finger-ends for convenience when leaves of the Bible, hymn-book, and sermon were to be turned, and with a peculiar lurch of the right hand when some *glowing* thought was striving for utterance; then and there, by force of memory and the association of the place, returned to me the very tones which had again and again lulled me to sleep, despite the nudges in the side, and the chucks under the chin, more than a hundred times administered by the better sort of listeners in the pew. When the pause after the "grace" was broken, and the crowd

seemingly vanished, my dream faded with the last step of 'Tunbridge, the sexton; and I rolled forward without effort from sweet twenty-one to ripe fifty-one. In quietness I sat alone, and, as a *finale* to my visions, deciphered the "initials" of all the children who had sat in that same pew, mine amongst the number, scratched with a pin on the painted board upon which used to repose Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns.

Our minister was very conscientious, and his bump of self-denial extra large. The latter trait is shown in the following anecdote: A Mr. Manchester, a shoemaker, who lived, where he worked, near the "Parade," was perhaps the best workman in his line in the United States. I doubt if he had his equal in London or in Paris. The finish and *fit* of his shoes were unrivalled. Mr. P., soon after his settlement, heard of the excellence of Mr. Manchester's handiwork. On meeting one of his parishioners, he acquainted him with the fact of his having secured the promise of a pair of Mr. Manchester's shoes. "Yes," replied his friend, "Mr. Manchester is a grand workman; but he does his best work on Sundays." On the Mon-

day morning following this conversation, Mr. Manchester appeared at the parsonage, holding an admirable pair of shoes, which the minister eyed with a dubious look. "Mr. Manchester, when were these shoes made?" — "They were made yesterday," was the prompt reply. "Well," said the disappointed "divine," "I want the shoes," handling them quite daintily; "but my conscience will not allow me to encourage your desecration of the sabbath;" and so they parted.

DR. SAMUEL HOPKINS. — This divine was quite aged when I came on the stage. His success, if he enjoyed any, must have been mainly owing to his scholarly reputation and piety; for he was devoid of all the gifts of oratory. His voice lacked mellowness and compass. His manner wanted grace and earnestness; and when my mother compelled me to attend his services, as she always did when her own minister was absent, I never forgot the chill that came over me; and my only consolation was the certainty, that ere long the good doctor would use the press, rather than the

pulpit, as a medium for his dark sayings. But in this I was mistaken; for he wore the gospel armor to extreme old age.

Dr. Hopkins was a dogmatist of the "first water." He adhered, with exceeding pertinacity, to extreme views respecting infant responsibility, and of man's willingness to suffer any degree of woe for the glory of God. Whether such views cropped out in his sermons, I dare not assert, for I was too young to receive intelligibly such ideas; but I was not too young to hear the opinions of others respecting them. The doctor, although tender-hearted as a child, felt conscientiously bound to advocate dogmas peculiarly his own, which, however, caused great disaffection in the town, and especially among parents. The knowledge of such advocacy having been spread abroad, and exciting much feeling, a young man, a wag in his day, sketched a caricature (a mere daub) on coarse paper, of brick-dust color, which vividly illustrated the painful features of the doctor's discourses. It was placarded at the corner of Mary Street, and caused great sensation. So unusual a method of opposing opinions had

never before been tried; and, repulsive as it was, it did its work then, and required no subsequent revival.

One would have supposed from his face, that the doctor was eminently ill-tempered and unforgiving. On the contrary, as before intimated, he was kind, gentle to a fault, and given to charitable deeds, even beyond what was prudent. His society was mostly composed of laboring men; and, but for aid from one member who was rich, the doctor's funds would always have been at a low ebb. He was ungainly in gait and dress,—wore, when on horseback, a robe of stuff called at the time calamanco, a glossy, woollen material, of green color, which was secured round the waist by a silk girdle. His head-gear was a red cap, over a wig. He rode with his arms a-kimbo. The doctor's manner of life was singularly simple. His table was spread on Sundays for the especial benefit of a few aged friends, who lived at a distance from the meeting-house, by two or three individuals, who sent food ready-cooked for the doctor's guests.

It was an age of contradictions when the



doctor flourished. His stern, immutable doctrines were preached, and fiery darts were figuratively hurled at men's heads; but not one word was uttered against intemperance, against swearing, gambling, and riotous living. The pulpit then had no anathemas against these vices. The slave-trade received no rebuke, save from a few radicals, who, in turn, were shunned as enemies to good order. Many young men, of respectable parentage, who had been my playmates and school-fellows, sank into the drunkard's grave.

The last time I heard, or rather pretended to hear, the doctor preach, was one Sunday when Dr. Pattin was away, or sick. He was then so physically disabled as to make assistance necessary, which was rendered by Mr. Newport Gardner, the sexton of the church, a colored man, remarkably intelligent, considering the slight opportunities he enjoyed for mental culture. He always accompanied the doctor, as he advanced in years, into the church, and up the pulpit stairs. During the introductory services, he would remain on a little seat outside the pulpit, fronting the congregation, until

the parson was fairly underway in the sermon, and would then descend to the floor, keeping his eye on the pulpit until the last prayer, when he would assist the doctor to his home, which was but a short distance from the church.

I read, at the time of its publication, Mrs. Stowe's celebrated romance, entitled "The Minister's Wooing." Her representations of Dr. Hopkins's silent and irresponsible courtship may have in it a shadowy semblance of truth, although I must confess my ignorance of any of the items woven into her matchless fiction. Dr. Hopkins lived near our house. There were great talkers in my day; and every thing in the shape of a fact, rumor, or legend, concerning every body and every thing, relating to the past and present, was sifted and filtered to a nicety unknown at the present day; and, if any such characters existed in connection with the courtship as shine out in Mrs. Stowe's story, they would be found in the printed gossip of the day, or in posthumous history. Dr. Hopkins lived almost exclusively in his study, plodding for dear life over his favorite themes. It is im-

possible, from the nature of the case, that he could have allowed himself to be suborned into love-making, after the pattern in the book.

REV. THEODORE DEHON. — I have very pleasant recollections of this most truly devout Christian minister. I was acquainted with him during his whole ministry in Newport, from 1797 until 1810. I remember with great pleasure his kind welcome of me in Charleston, S.C., in the winter of 1811, whilst I was preparing for a voyage, as supercargo of the ship "Commodore Preble," bound to Lisbon. Mr. Dehon received his degree at Harvard College, in the class of 1795. He was warmly attached to my eldest brother, who was a member of the class of 1794. They grew up together; and it may truly be said of them, that their souls were knit as were the souls of David and Jonathan. Although educated in differing households of faith, they went hand in hand, and heart to heart, in the love and fear of God, — each to his calling; and, in a few years after the death of my brother, Mr. Dehon followed him to the heavenly mansions, — as we trust, to renew for

eternity the friendship which made their early life so sweet.

We read in Scripture, that the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. It was the refusal of the former to allow the latter to take part in rebuilding Jerusalem and the ancient temple that gave rise to the hatred which afterwards existed between the two races. I would not have any one infer from the above item in sacred history, that any thing like so bitter an enmity characterized the differences existing between the various sects in my day, especially in the case of the Episcopalians and Congregationalists. But there was a marked lack of cheerful intercourse in the commonest concerns of life, and very little even of a speaking or bowing acquaintance. I was not old enough at the time of Mr. Dehon's union with the "Church of England," as it was then denominated in Newport, to understand the ground of contention between the faith he cherished, and that of Baptists and Congregationalists; for they were all Calvinists. Some there were who charged him with clerical pride, with the "holier-than-thou" feeling. Mr. Dehon was,

confessedly, very peculiar—it would be termed *starched* at this late day of modern refinement—in gait, dress, voice, and manner. Others there were, more charitable, who ascribed his extra dignified and set ways, in and out of the pulpit, to a deep consciousness of the sacredness of his calling. He was morbidly sensitive on this point; and a very delicate and nervous organization rendered this feature of his clerical character still more apparent.

Notwithstanding the Congregational prejudices fostered at home, I was frequently permitted to attend Mr. Dehon's church, and to sit in the pew of my highly respected employer, for whom I was named; and I often received a kind pat on the head, when, in answer to the question, "What is your name?" the response was quick, and intended to be effective,— "George Gibbs;" dropping for the nonce my family name. When I grew older, I perceived this was a childish, artful dodge. I relished very keenly the soul-inspiring music of blind Birkenhead, at Trinity Church, played on the best organ then in America, the gift of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne. Rev. Mr. Dehon was one

of the handsomest men in the town ; his complexion, very fair and brilliant. His dress, for richness, when compared with the ultra-Puritan coarseness and undress of other ministers, rendered him at times exceedingly conspicuous. His walk was so measured and apparently studied, though perfectly natural, that many playful boys, and especially one who belonged to his church, and who, I believe, became a minister, successfully imitated his gait.

When I contrasted the comparative grandeur of Trinity-Church architecture and embellishments, and its singular impressiveness and beauty at the Christmas season, with the cold and cheerless aspect of our dilapidated, unfurnished meeting-house, I could not withhold an occasional regret for my connection with the latter. There were, however, two or three associations connected with Trinity Church, which invariably offended me, young as I was, as often as I turned my head towards the organ-loft. I could not bear the crown and mitre on the top of the organ. I was taught to hate popery,—I did not know why ; and these signs of man-worship were too significant for my

parents' spiritual digestion. In the second place, during my boyhood, the services of the church were responded to by a burly, pompous clerk; and when he named the psalm or hymn, as the minister retired to the vestry to part with the surplice,—prefacing it with “Let us sing to the praise and glory of God,”—I felt in no way inclined to mingle my thin and tiny voice with the rough and loud intonations of the chorister, being aware of his bad habit, only too common at that day, but by no means pleasant, when connected with church matters. In the third place, I was early taught to hate slavery; and it kindled my youthful ire, when I became acquainted with the stratagem employed by the Vestry to conceal the presence of colored people during service, which was effected by placing a frame, with pear-shaped apertures, at the side of the organ, through which they could see the minister and congregation without being seen.

Mr. Dehon's pulpit services were deservedly esteemed. Perhaps no minister in the town influenced, religiously, more minds and hearts than he. The tone of his discourses was emphatically serious. His gestures were effective,

and his appeals in behalf of the cause he advocated wonderfully touching. I was strangely moved at the sight of tears falling from old and young eyes. It was mysterious to me then, but not afterwards, when riper years revealed the charm of Mr. Dehon's eloquence. His sermons were eminently practical. No one was left in doubt of the preacher's meaning.

I cannot close this brief sketch of so truly devout a minister of Christ, without mentioning the universal respect entertained in my native place for Bishop Dehon. He was possessed of a most heavenly temper. His printed discourses evince an intense love of God; and hence his entire consecration to the Christian ministry, which could not fail of inspiring others with a like affection. Whilst some may have carped at a peculiar mannerism, not one disallowed the bishop's mental power and spiritual worth. It was felt to be a great loss when he dissolved his connection with the Episcopal Church in Newport.

During Bishop Dehon's residence in Newport, he suffered much from an incipient and constantly increasing tumor on the back of the



neck. It was, perhaps, one of the largest known in surgical practice; and hence its removal involved not a little hazard to life. The sufferer, after consultation with the most eminent surgeons in Boston, determined to abide the consequences of an operation; making, previously, all necessary arrangements in case of an unfavorable issue. It was a terrible affair; but it happily terminated without loss of life, and the bishop continued a prosperous ministry for many years. He died in Charleston, S.C., in 1817.

REV. MICHAEL EDDY. — I leave the “church,” and come once more to one of the plainest of meeting-houses; the one under the pastoral care of Rev. Mr. Eddy, generally pronounced in the town *Edee*. He was a Baptist clergyman, and no worthier man ever discoursed of heavenly themes. I was often taken, when quite young, to his church, — I should have said meeting-house, — not far in the rear of the State House, more frequently called Court House, as the courts were holden in the Representative Chamber. Elder Eddy had the most open and

gladsome countenance imaginable. His smile was a benediction; and the grasp of his hand indicated the possession of a warm heart. I recollect two very small chandeliers suspended from the ceiling by a blue rope, with here and there a little wreath of gold leaf. The chandelier was a block of wood, of circular shape, with a number of branches, which tempted my gaze oftener than my attendant deemed proper. A more inelegant thing my better-educated vision never beheld. The chorister *chewed* the tune, and swallowed his words; for not one was ever articulated. There was sound enough, but no substance. Mr. Eddy's voice seldom expanded beyond the natural conversational tone; and yet there was no lack of persuasiveness, for his eye entreated when his voice was most subdued. He always read the text from a pocket Bible; and, although he seldom quoted from it save by force of memory, he uniformly held it with his left hand, and with the fore-finger between the pages containing the text, so that he might refer to it whenever it was necessary. I often became wearied, and somewhat impatient; waiting for

the "Elder" to remove the finger, and close the book, which was a visible announcement to the congregation that the sermon was ended. Once, I recollect, I mistook the sign, and gaye a spring from the seat to the floor a little too soon, which mortified our good housekeeper, who had the care of me. There were several of Elder Eddy's society who lived on the island, two or three miles from town, and who were in the habit of riding to meeting on horseback, the husband in front, and the wife in the rear, seated on a pillion, with her arm round his waist for security. Two of these couples — Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Peckham, and Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Peckham — I always delighted to meet as they approached the horse-block, standing near the porch of the main door of the meeting-house. They were goodness personified. Four happier-looking people I never met with.

I do not believe there ever was a minister more beloved than Mr. Eddy. He was not extolled on account of intellectual gifts. These were few, but well ordered. It was self-culture, principally, which rendered him so useful in his public services. It was his inestimable

spiritual graces which awakened such intense love for him, whether in the pulpit or out of it. I recollect one day, upon reaching home, I heard the saddest wail from the bedroom and, upon asking what had happened, was told that Elder Eddy was dangerously sick at Bristol, about ten miles from Newport, and that the news had so completely overwhelmed Rachel, the good woman who had so often taken me to her minister's meeting when a child, as to send her inconsolable to bed. Such sympathy between the pastor and people was universal.

Mr. Eddy was liberal and catholic towards all, of whatever name. His warm, sympathetic word, and ready grasp of the hand, were the property of the poorest body in the town. He maintained the dignity of the clerical office, without repressing innocent expressions of joy in others. But few men lived so useful and blameless a life. He took pleasure in fishing in deep water from the rocks at the Second Beach, hooking bass, bluefish, and tautog, and in the harbor for tomcod or perch; and was equally skilful as a "fisher of men," drawing

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them, not with rude jerks, but with silken cords. My brother, William E. Channing, always spoke of Mr. Eddy with the respect due to an eminently good man.

REV. GARDINER THURSTON. — He was the minister of the Second Baptist Society in Newport. The meeting-house was a good-sized, but an unusually plain edifice. I think it had no steeple. Notwithstanding its entire want of external architectural beauty, it possessed an attraction within, that fully compensated for all deficiencies. PARSON Thurston, as he was called, had the power of attracting great congregations, and of attaching to himself not a few friends. He was not a learned man; but his working of the gospel-net proved that "he lived his sermons." Old Thomas Fuller somewhere remarked, that it was said of one who preached very well and practised very ill, that "when he was in the pulpit he should never go out of it, and that when he was out of it he should never go into it;" but Rev. Mr. Thurston, whose ministry was prolonged to nearly half a century, had a profitable sermon, and an audience, not only

in the church, but in every house and shop, by the seaside, at Gravelly Point (where he baptized), at the bedside of the sick, and in the "house of mourning." He was not dependent upon a written discourse, but was always prepared to contend with sin, and encourage virtue. He lived at a time when ministers were not annoyed with hypocritical hearers, always boasting of their readiness to eat the bread of heaven, but only when it was made savory, and easy of digestion, or after a certain formula. Their hearers were chiefly among the uneducated, just such as heard Christ gladly. They were comfortable livers and devout worshippers. They gladly fed on the milk of the word, until, "grown into the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus," they could bear strong meat. The Bible, when I was a boy, had a far greater number of readers than it has in this palmy period of extra-refined civilization. There are legions of formalists now, but, in Thurston's time, comparatively few. People flocked to the houses of worship then, because they were poor in spirit, hungering for the bread of heaven, and thirsting for the water of life; because they

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were deaf, and would have their ears unsealed; and were blind, and would see the way into Canaan. Now, they go up the broad aisle flaunting their rich brocades, ribbons, and jewels, and with heads so uncovered, as to draw down, if that were possible, the ghostly anathemas of St. Paul; and if, perchance, while in the occupancy of their luxuriously cushioned pews, the minister who is to speak to them of holy things is of less mental stature than their accustomed favorite, they scarcely have the grace to appear to hear the word.

I recollect hearing a contemporary of Parson Thurston give, as a proof of his conscientiousness, at a time when the slave-trade was deemed a pardonable offence, his absolute refusal to use his craft (that of a cooper) for the manufacture of any description of cask used in the shipment of New-England rum "to the coast." This was a staple commodity in Rhode Island; and the high prices offered for casks was an immense temptation to swerve from duty; but the pecuniary sacrifice he bore most cheerfully. Ministers were often obliged to work with their hands, as well as with their brain and heart.

Their salaries, many of them, were grievously small.

REV. JOSHUA BRADLEY.—When Parson Thurston was released from ministerial services in consequence of physical infirmities, the Second Baptist Society invited Rev. Joshua Bradley to follow him in the ministry of our Lord. Mr. Bradley was quite young, of less than average height, of compact frame, with hair of raven blackness, and with a voice of great compass. He would be considered at the present day a sensational or revival preacher. During his ministry of six years, his church increased beyond the rate of any previous period. The baptismal rite by immersion occurred once a month; and the candidates were so numerous as to render necessary the use of a *week* day for the performance of the rite. The throng of spectators added to the excitement of the scene. The place selected was south of the “Blue Rocks,” so called, near the shipyard where the “Mount Hope” was built, on Washington Street. Oftentimes a strong south-west wind would so disturb that portion of the harbor as

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apparently to make the administration of the ordinance fearfully hazardous. But the young divine was never daunted; and, by going off into deep water, the physical effort was rendered comparatively easy. Till I got accustomed to the sight, it was very painful; yet its attraction was irresistible.

I have pleasant recollections of the singing-school under the direction of Deacon Babcock, whose sacred concerts were generally well attended. I was one of his pupils. I also recollect a great snow-storm which happened about the time of Mr. Bradley's ministry, from the circumstance that the immense front door of his meeting-house was barricaded from top to bottom with a drift of such dimensions as to require many days' shovelling before entrance could be obtained. It was the greatest fall of snow within the experience "of the oldest inhabitant."

ELDER BLISS. — I have spoken of him during a day's experience when he kindly officiated for Dr. Pattin, who had but recently recovered from a severe illness. He was a Sabbatarian, or Sev-

enth-day Baptist. When very aged, he attempted to perform the rite of baptism at "Gravelly Point;" and, whether from physical infirmity or from slipperiness of the ground, he stumbled and fell, with her whom he held by the hand, in deep water, causing great consternation. They were shortly extricated; and this was the last public religious service in which he engaged.

REV. FREDERICK SMITH. — He was minister of the Moravian Church, or "United Brethren." I used occasionally to attend his meetings, held in one of the humblest-looking buildings, near my mother's house. Charles King, the celebrated portrait-painter, and one of my playmates, whose religious education was in harmony with this sect, used to call for me that I might accompany him to the church. Certain evenings were devoted to the reading of missionary reports, in an upper chamber; for the church and the pastor's house were under the same roof. This upper room I shall retain the recollection of as long as my memory lasts: it was so faintly lighted as to render objects somewhat ghostly; and then the min-

ister's voice was peculiarly dismal, and so embarrassed by an impediment as to render attention very painful. I often became wearied, and my head would drop, indicating unseemly drowsiness, which my companion tried to overcome by a frequent nudge. The seats of the church were made of planed boards, with narrow backs. The music was always of a plaintive type. I rejoiced when "love-feasts" were announced from the pulpit, to be held on certain evenings, open to all who could contribute a coin, — a fourpence-ha'penny, once in common use, but now very rare. At these love-feasts, after remarks from the minister tracing them back to apostolic times, little cups of very nice chocolate, with a savory bun, were presented to each guest, young and old, girls and boys, in exchange for the little coin, always forthcoming.

When last in Newport, I made a point of looking up my Moravian friends; but learned that the sect had there become extinct, and that the building which they had occupied had been converted into a public school.

REV. MR. MERVIN. — This gentleman was minister of the Methodist Church. I enjoyed his preaching, as it was less prosaic than the usual style of other churches in town. The music was more fiery and emphatic than elsewhere. It exhilarated me; and I loved to catch and repeat their high-toned choruses. My taste for this form of worship has never died out.

REV. JOHN MURRAY. — Although an unaccredited minister, his visits to Newport were so frequent, and his preaching so sensational, that I should feel my record incomplete without reference to a few recollections of his varied gifts. Almost all the ministers were afraid of him, because of his mental and elocutionary gifts. He was held as a disturber of the peace, a very incendiary. When he was informed, from time to time, of the wretched "Laodicean" plight of the Newport churches, he would hasten there, his soul overflowing with the doctrine of "Universal Amnesty." He rang so many beautiful changes on this theme, that none ever tired. He obtained the lower hall of the State House for his meetings, which were some-

times threatened with disturbances, but which never affected his straightforward preaching. He never lost an opportunity of disturbing the "dry bones" of sectarianism. He was nominally Orthodox; believed in a qualified "Trinity," and in an *unqualified* "Atonement," minus the vicarious clause. The Universalist dogma, "Salvation to all," was the beginning and the end of the Murray school. I shall never forget the unction with which he used to read the doxology, commencing with—

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

The peculiar salubrity of the climate of Newport attracted a large number of clergymen from various quarters during the summer months. The fact, that many intelligent Southerners made it their home, drew attention to its charms; and even then were quite noticeable the handsome carriages and gay horses which they kept.

Besides the ministers already named in this chapter, I remember listening frequently to Rev. Messrs. Griswold, of Bristol; Crocker, of Providence; Gano, from Providence; Holmes,

from Cambridge; Morse, from Charlestown; Parish, from Byfield; Osgood, from Medford; and Gardner, of Boston. The arrival of these gentlemen, from time to time, caused a great stir in town; and the churches, for the time being, were thronged by those who seldom attended church, except to hear "some new thing." I was struck with the appearance of Rev. Jedediah Morse. He was tall, slim, cadaverous; and, owing to the thinness of his long neck, he felt obliged to wear an immense stock. Dr. Gardner, of Trinity Church, Boston, was wonderfully presentable,—of good figure and expressive countenance. He had one peculiar habit,—that of carrying an umbrella, however fair the weather. His mode of reading was admirable,—a gift to which no other clergyman, during his day, could lay claim.

## CHAPTER VI.

## LAWYERS. — LEGAL PRACTICE.

“The good legal advocate is one that will not plead a cause wherein his tongue must be confuted by his conscience.”

IT was a very common thing, when I was young, for lads to attend court between school hours. The judge was, to them, an awful personage, sitting apart on a high seat. The opening ceremony by the crier, with his *Oyes, oyes, oyes*, had a sensible effect upon the bar and witnesses, commanding silence. My attention was directed to subordinate officers, with arms full of buff-colored books, which were placed in front of the bar. I understood better their purpose as I grew older. Instead of the judge charging the jury, so universal at the present day, the court\* were passive listeners to the law authorities, as *quoted by the counsel*, pro and con, in support of their several argu-

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\* Court of Common Pleas.

ments. When the juries were bidden to retire in order to consider the cause of action, and make up their verdict, the books and papers used in the trial were taken by the sheriff or his deputies to the lobby, and from thence to the jury room.

It was a very exciting day in Newport when the Circuit Court of the United States held its semi-annual sessions. Especially was this the case when it was noised about that distinguished legal combatants were to argue. I perfectly well recollect contests between distinguished lawyers of Connecticut; and between Otis and Dexter, of Massachusetts,—Judge Cushing (almost superannuated, as I thought) on the bench. At another time, I witnessed a most important legal battle fought by the last two advocates. Each had an assistant at the opening. One of these, from Providence, R.I., was so homely, that a general impression prevailed, that no case could be successful, if managed by so uncomely a person; but Mr. Otis, the accomplished pleader, was too wise to be the slave of appearances. He knew his man, and, as the case progressed, gave sig-



nificant proof of his confidence in the legal brother. This gentleman exhibited so much legal talent, that his great personal disadvantages became less and less apparent as he made his case clear. Eloquent legal sparring never failed attracting a multitude of listeners to the Court House. I may be permitted to indulge in an episode relating to the impression made upon a youthful mind by these two distinguished men.

Mr. Otis, as already referred to, was of ordinary stature; but he could at pleasure assume a lofty air, which had the effect at once of engineering successfully the cause he had in hand into the good graces of the jury. His manner was wonderfully winning; his voice, melodious, clear, and of great compass, and as flexible as a child's. He was ever ready to concede whatever of right reasoning there was in his opponent's argument, but never failed to denounce severely equivocation or falsehood. Mr. Otis was, by nature, a rhetorician of the first rank. He never handled his weapons lightly, unless his adversary's cause was weak, when pity mingled with contempt, and he left him to the tender

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mercies of the jury. In action, Mr. Otis was graceful. "He suited the action to the word" in that just proportion which always rivets attention; and his statements were so candidly and accurately rendered, that they were even seldom questioned. If, in arguing a cause, some features of it struck him as likely to embarrass the Court, he would, without awakening a suspicion of his motive, gently and gradually anticipate objections, and thus fortify himself in advance against any attack from his adversary.

Mr. Samuel Dexter was a very different sort of man. He had a hard face, very much of the Huguenot type, a dark complexion, a compressed mouth, a telling eye, and a majestic presence. His voice was round, his articulation so perfect that no word was lost by a ready listener. He seldom gesticulated, and lacked the grace and fervor that distinguished Mr. Otis. There was no horizontal pointing of the finger, nor graceful waving of the arm, with him, as with Mr. Otis. He was a believer in strict legalism. Every question at law in his mind had to be reduced as any problem in mathematics, so as to be measured, weighed, and numbered. He seemed to

disdain metaphor. He never attempted to gain a cause by smooth pleading, rhetorical flourishes, or questionable illustrations. He would brush away all such advocacy as a mere impertinence. He was a strong man ; an honest man. He never sought a client, and never lost one.

As it was often the case in the management of important legal questions before the United-States Court for Rhode-Island District to employ distinguished lawyers from neighboring States, I have ventured, as prefatory to notices of the principal advocates connected more immediately with the Newport bar, to introduce sketches of two eminent lawyers of Massachusetts, who were frequently *pitted* against each other at the above-mentioned tribunal. The recollections in respect to these gentlemen are ingrained in my memory. As far as they go, I feel sure they are correct, though, doubtless, some persons are still living who may retain of them a better memory. I seem to see and hear Mr. Otis and Mr. Dexter to-day, as distinctly as in Newport more than half a century ago. I have drawn the outlines of their portraits accurately ; and, if my coloring is called

in question, that is a matter of taste, for which I do not feel responsible.

The most eminent Newport lawyers were, during my time, Asher Robbins, William Hunter, and Benjamin Hazard.

Mr. Robbins united the power of strict legal analysis with great forensic and rhetorical gifts. In cases of appeal, demanding pathos, he was admirable. He insinuated himself into the hearts of jurymen, by the sly way to which Curran once had successful recourse; viz., that of anticipating his opponent's arguments, and then, in a very felicitous manner, exposing their weak points. As a statesman and politician, he held a high rank; and some of the most influential members of the United-States Senate bore their testimony to his fidelity in committee matters, and to his signal ability in preparing and discussing topics of interest to the State which he represented, and which were also of wider application. Mr. Robbins's voice was often embarrassed, apparently, by a chronic complaint of the lungs, but which never hindered the performance of all his professional and public duties.

HON. WILLIAM HUNTER. — Hardly any legal advocate sustained himself with greater ability than this gentleman. I have many pleasant recollections of the graceful and forcible manner with which he addressed a jury or a political meeting. Especially at the latter was he deemed indispensable, when exciting subjects were to be agitated. It was my good fortune to listen to several declamations by a brilliant Scotch orator of the name of Ogilvie, at the Masonic Lodge building. *His* manner strikingly resembled that of Mr. Hunter. The only drawback to the success of the latter as a public speaker was an apparent enlargement of the tongue, which prevented rapid and distinct articulation; and yet he was successful in the assembly and in court. I had occasion to visit him frequently with messages from my employers, but never found him so absorbed in office matters as to be visibly disturbed by such intrusions. With mercantile jurisprudence Mr. Hunter was well acquainted; and, as the commercial marine of Newport supplied ample material for litigation, Mr. Hunter had his full share in the settlement of these suits. It was not

only at the bar that he became distinguished; but in the Senate of the United States, associated with Mr. Burrill, he labored, although unsuccessfully, for the prevention of the "Missouri Compromise." Subsequently, Mr. Hunter received honorable mention as minister of the United States at the court of Brazil.

BENJAMIN HAZARD.—This gentleman was one of the best chamber or advisory lawyers in the State. He seemed to delight in a knotty case. It was then that his coolness, patience, and collectedness in unravelling legal subtleties became evident, and hence his reliableness in all difficult cases. In important legal issues, lawyers of celebrity in other States, as already alluded to, were retained. I well recollect one from the State of Connecticut, who, in pleading, seemed to be unable to hold "the thread of his discourse" without the constant use of a handkerchief drawn alternately through the thumb and fingers of each hand. In a like manner, Mr. Hazard seemed to feel the necessity of a frequent recourse to his snuff-box. Mr. Hazard was no orator, like Hunter or Robbins. He in-

dulged in no flights of fancy. It was not in his way; but he had a way—a “dry way,” some called it—of mapping out his case with “buts and bounds,” and so accurately as to rivet the attention of court and jury, and, better still, secure for his client a favorable verdict. Although a mere lad, I frequently found myself listening with pleasure to this acute and able counsellor.

Besides the members of the profession already alluded to, our courts were attended by a galaxy from the Providence bar. There was Burrill, the legal logician; Searle, keen as a razor, and skilful beyond precedent in foiling an adversary; Crapo, not handsome, but with sense enough to make one forget externals; Bridgham, dry, classical, and persevering; Bourne, ponderous and magisterial; and Burgess, sensational. No man could make such a ferment in an audience as the latter.

I have dwelt more at length upon items of legal practice than some of my readers may have deemed necessary, because of the benefit and pleasure which attendance upon courts of

law in early life afforded me. Very many legal "precedents" aided me in after-life. Even the direct and cross examination of witnesses helped me not a little in the study of evidence, and impressed me with the need of teaching and enforcing the principles of moral science in the schools of the day; for it was painful to observe how the constant habit of profane swearing had almost obliterated from the public mind the sacred obligation of an oath.

AN INTERESTING CONTROVERSY.—While an apprentice to Gibbs & Channing, I became acquainted with a lawsuit of long standing, which increased in bitterness as years rolled on. The cost of litigation to both parties vastly exceeded the sum at issue. I once heard Mr. Channing express his deep regret, that when the parties met at Mr. Gibbs's house in Newport, and he appointed mediator, with a view to a compromise of the matter in dispute, he did not take the responsibility of paying out of his own pocket the sum about which the parties differed.

The question at law arose from a construction entertained by the plaintiff, as to the le-



gitimate meaning of a letter addressed by the defendant to him, which letter was as follows : —

N. R., Esq.

PROVIDENCE, Jan. 20, 1796.

DEAR SIR, — Our friends, Messrs. R. M. & Co., merchants in New York, having determined to enter largely into the speculation of rice, and other articles of your produce, in Charleston, but being entire strangers there, they have applied to us for letters of introduction to our friend. In consequence of which, we do ourselves the pleasure of introducing them to your correspondence as a house on whose integrity and punctuality the utmost dependence may be placed. They will write you the nature of their intentions; and you may be assured of their complying fully with any contracts or engagements they may enter into with you. The friendship we have for these gentlemen induces us to wish you will render them every service in your power. At the same time, we flatter ourselves the correspondence will prove a mutual benefit.

We are, with sentiments of esteem, dear sir,

Your most obedient servants,

(Signed) C. & N.

The foregoing letter was received by Mr. R., and held by him as a regular mercantile letter of credit; and he did, in accordance with it and upon its receipt, purchase, in behalf of said

R. B. M. & Co., Southern produce, amounting to twenty-five thousand dollars, for which sum they drew in favor of Mr. R., on C. & N., which bills were refused payment, and protested. An action was brought by Mr. R. *vs.* C. & N., and argued before the Circuit Court for Rhode-Island District, and a verdict for the full amount returned in favor of the plaintiff. An appeal was made to the next Circuit Court of the same district, which issued in favor of Mr. R. It was then taken to Pennsylvania District, when the decision resulted in favor of C. & N., the defendants. Subsequently the case was carried up to the Supreme Court of the United States at Washington, at the February term, 1813, and decided against Mr. R. Thus, seventeen years were occupied in settling the meaning of a plain, straightforward mercantile letter. Mr. R. not only lost the sum for which he brought the action, but not less than twenty thousand dollars in costs.

I commend the foregoing reminiscence to the attention of business men, if I should have such for my readers.

## CHAPTER VII.

## PHYSICIANS. — MEDICAL PRACTICE.

“ We should become anxious rather to take care of health when we have it, than first to lose it, and then exert ourselves to recover it.”

“ Health is that which makes the *bed easy*, *sleep refreshing*, that *revives strength*, *promotes cheerfulness*, makes the body *plump* and *comely*, which dresseth it up in Nature’s richest attire, and adorns the face with her choicest colors.” — *Advice of an Eminent Physician.*

MY recollections embrace a familiar acquaintance with those devoted professionally to the healing art. Quackery was not the sin of my day and generation. Simple physical maladies were cured by the mildest domestic treatment: viz., wormwood tea, as an emetic; oil, for constipation; balm and sage, for colds; salt and vinegar, as gargles; burdock and mustard, for poultices. These constituted the family “cure-alls.” Pills, tinctures, healing-plasters, blisters, powders, fitted to cope with grave or acute diseases, were never administered, save by direction of thoroughly educated physicians. One or two men there were in town who claimed, by authority of “seventh-son” descent,

the power to work miraculous cures,— the power since claimed by “ mediums,” under the sanction of “ spiritualism.” It was a pure allopathic age; homœopathy and hydropathy were not yet born; and hence bleeding, blistering, and physicking remained for years the general rule. I shall never forget the screams of children when *under* treatment. They would begin whining at the first clatter of the spoon in the *cup of healing*; and when the napkin under the chin was well tucked in, and the little hands were held as in a vice, then came the tug of infantile and motherly war. Such crying! such choking!— oh! who can adequately describe the struggle, as of life and death? The first sign of interference with allopathy appeared upon the importation from England of a variety of patent medicines; such as Solomon’s Balm of Gilead, Mrs. Godfrey’s Cordial, Dalby’s Carminative, and the like. These were heralded by immense placards, surmounted by the “ Lion and the Unicorn,” from many apothecaries’ windows. Now, these cordials were just so many hot drops, obtained under pretence of innocent medication, but, in fact, only for stimulating purposes. There were

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hard drinkers in 1795, besides those who frequented tap-houses.

I was well acquainted with most of the physicians in the town. Dr. Isaac Senter was at the head of his profession, and was equally distinguished in surgery. In size, in height, and in countenance, he presented the finest specimen of manly beauty in Newport. His mental gifts were rare, his character was blameless, his conversation delightful. He was our family physician. I have spoken of him once before, as the fearless practitioner, when so many denounced the idea of small-pox inoculation. Dr. Senter exerted a sort of enchantment when summoned to a sick-bed. If the case demanded only "simples," his smile proved more potential than his recipe. If the symptoms indicated serious disease, he would most happily blend treatment both serious and encouraging. His death was universally lamented. At home, and in distant lands, the highest commendation was awarded him for medical and surgical superiority. I shall ever retain a vivid recollection of the Sunday when Dr. Pattin discoursed in the morning upon the death of Washington, and

in the afternoon presented, ably and forcibly, the reasons why the departure of such a man as Dr. Senter should be lamented, and his memory embalmed. Notwithstanding my youth and consequent inexperience as regards death-scenes, I shall hold fast, to the latest hour of my life, the mournful aspects of our house of worship, the subdued voice of the singers, the unusual emphasis of the preacher,—all tending to render that day one of the most noteworthy within my recollection.

DR. JONATHAN EASTON. — I always entertained great respect for this patriarchal professor of the healing art. He blended so much benignity of manner with his medicine, as to render the bitter comparatively sweet. I am not aware of the extent of his practice ; but, in many of the most respectable families, he inspired the utmost confidence. I have reason to cherish the most grateful recollections of this estimable physician and valued citizen. When suffering from a severe eruption on the back, I consulted a young but very popular doctor, who, on examination, confessed he had never witnessed a similar case.

I was compelled to relinquish my usual business, and spent much of my time in Mr. Charles Feke's apothecary shop. Whilst there one morning, Dr. Easton came in, and Mr. Feke stated my case. Upon examination, the doctor decided it was an aggravated attack of "shingles;" and gave a prescription, which, in three days, effected a cure. The pain incident to this case was terrible; very much like that from needle punctures, constantly increasing in number and sharpness.

DR. EDMUND T. WARING.—He had much of the grace of manner of Dr. Senter, in whose footsteps he evidently aimed to walk. He was affable, and possessed a sweet voice. He had no small talk. Sympathy in behalf of aged, infirm, and querulous persons he expressed so delicately, that he never lost a friend, nor *gained* an enemy. He had a pale, thoughtful, expressive face. He was born at the South, and inherited Southern tendencies. His temperament was even, which aided him in distinguishing one disease from another. His native politeness never prevented, in exigent cases, his announcing a decision, however opposed to the opinions

of his patients. He was a thoroughly educated physician. He married the eldest daughter of Hon. Francis Malbone.

DR. WILLIAM TURNER. — This gentleman, in person, presented a striking contrast to Dr. Senter in height and size; but his sinewy frame was equal to any amount of professional labor. He was very active, and of rather a nervous temperament, as I always thought. His face denoted firmness; his manners were the reverse of showy; and his directions were free from wordiness. He was just the man to contend with a severe and complicated disease, and hence was frequently consulted in difficult cases. I recollect perfectly his management of a case (malignant typhus) at the residence of Mr. Robert Rogers, on the Parade. The subject, Mr. Henry Flagg, a Southerner, was a particular friend of mine; and I was summoned, in company with Mr. John Slocum, to watch with the patient. It was one of the coldest nights in December; and, so violent was the disease, we were compelled to extinguish the fire on the hearth, and to keep one window



partially open. It seemed, humanly scanned, a case beyond the control of medicine or of stimulants: but Dr. Turner remained unmoved; and, at a moment when every one present deemed death near at hand, he discerned a symptom (a certain sign to him of recovery), and gave directions pertinent to a case of convalescence. In a few days, many hearts were cheered with the news of the young man's recovery.

I knew by name other physicians; viz., Mason, King, and Hazard, who were well reputed, and had their full share of practice. In a few instances, distinguished medical men were sent for from Boston and Providence. I remember, in the distressing sickness of Mr. Gibbs, which proved fatal, there were in attendance from the towns just named, Drs. Bowen, Danforth, and Warren. Besides the regular surgical practice, there was a famous bone-setter, by the name of Sweet, who lived in Narragansett, and from whom have descended many men, bone-setters, living principally in Rhode Island and Connecticut, and whose skill, it is said, has been acknowledged in a great number of instances.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## COMMERCE.

"The band of commerce was designed  
To associate all the branches of mankind;  
And, if a boundless plenty be the robe,  
Trade is the golden girdle of the globe."

OWING to the unrivalled excellence of Newport Harbor, it was, very early in the settlement of the island, considered a most important site for naval and mercantile ship-building. It happened to be the only port accessible, with the wind strong at north-west, which, being almost a "trade-wind" in the winter months, afforded a good harbor and safe anchorage to a host of vessels in the inner harbor, and a glorious roadstead for ships and frigates of any tonnage. The frigate General Greene was built by Mr. Gibbs, for the Government. She was commanded by Christopher Perry, father of O. H. Perry, of Lake-Erie fame. The sloop-of-war Warren was built at Warren. Nearly all of the United-States vessels were

fitted for sea at Newport. It was a grand sight, — the arrival and departure of so many gallant-looking ships, among them the Constitution (afterwards hailed as Ironsides), the Congress, President, and United States. The Congress, I well recollect, was entirely rigged, and furnished with ample cables, from Mr. Francis Brinley's ropewalk. Another reason why Newport was used for naval and commercial marine purposes was the mildness of its climate. Southerners, as already referred to, discovered this pleasant circumstance, caused by the warm current of sea-water from the Gulf of Mexico, which laves the shores around Newport, preventing the accumulation of floating ice, or of an ice blockade; and thus serving to increase its value as a port of entry and departure.

Mr. Gibbs was at one time more extensively engaged in mercantile pursuits than any other man in New England. His books prove this. He transacted the greater part of the wholesale business in his native State, in Connecticut, and in a good part of Massachusetts. Notwithstanding its limited boundaries, its small population, its lack of hard timber, and its whole southern

border frowning with rocks, the town survived many commercial rubs, and at one time rivalled New York. At the time when Mr. Gibbs wielded an immense capital (for those days), and when he took into partnership Mr. Walter Channing, the business of the place assumed an importance hardly to be credited at this day. Véry many of the richest men in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, to-day, are the descendants of men whose wealth had its rise and growth from their connection, as agents, with these two distinguished men.

My mercantile apprenticeship commenced in the spring of 1804, and continued until my majority, late in 1811. As I happened to be the youngest of Gibbs & Channing's employes, I was expected to take the whole care of the store; viz., to open and close the doors, to make the fires, sweep the floors, dust the furniture, and arrange the books in daily use. No required duty was to be neglected, however menial, which circumstances might render necessary. I recollect on one occasion, when a vessel was just leaving, that certain articles, indispensable for the voyage, had been left in the porch of the

store; and I was summoned to take them, as speedily as possible, to the wharf. I seized a wheelbarrow, loaded it, and ran through Thames Street at the busiest hour, meeting sundry young ladies (who did not withhold the usual nod of recognition on account of my servile employment), and reached the vessel just as she was being loosened from the wharf. I never lost *caste* by that act; and, during a long life, I have never shunned carrying a bundle from fear of offending "eyes polite."

Boys apprenticed to any business were not permitted to be in bed after sunrise, however inclement the weather. I recollect a day in winter, one of unusual severity for Newport, and one declared by "the oldest inhabitant" never to have been surpassed, — the streets a glare of ice, and trees losing their branches from the weight of the icicles, — I recollect, that on such a morning, before daybreak, I was on hand at the store of my employers, and had all things in readiness at that early hour for the partner whose business it was to prepare answers to letters (received at night), for the morning's mail. The watchmen were often alarmed by

the fire and lamp-light streaming through the shutters, and would raise an alarm note, which was immediately hushed by an explanation from the "youngest apprentice." There were three clerks; viz., Julius Auboyneau (to whom I became warmly attached), Rodolphus Malbone (son of Francis Malbone), and Mr. Joseph Lopez. They were all of them as accurate and expert book-keepers as was possible under so defective a system as that of "single entry." The Italian method, by "double entry," so universally adopted now, was either not known in my time, or, if known, not deemed preferable to that already in use.

That I may convey some idea of the extent of the business transacted by my employers, I will name the vessels belonging to them whilst I was in their service: viz., ships Russell, George and Mary, Friendship, Eagle, Hercules Courtney, Commerce, Washington, and Mount Hope; brigs Sally, John, and Brandywine; and schooner Federal. These vessels were sent to Batavia, St. Louis, Isle of Bourbon, Havana, Surinam, Holland, London, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Trieste, and France. Amongst the

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masters of these vessels were John and William Wood, Henry Hudson, John Earl, David M. Coggeshall, William Cozzens, Robert Lawton, John Boit, and Benjamin H. Rathbone. The casualties to the above-named vessels numbered only three: viz., ship Russell was captured by the French, and sent to Isle of France; ship Hercules Courtney, captured; and the ship Washington, a magnificent new ship, built on the Point, was shipwrecked, and totally lost, near Cronstadt, Russia. The most successful voyages, five in number, were those of the Mount Hope; Captain Boit, Francis Malbone supercargo, to the Isle of France. She was one of the largest Indiamen then known amongst us, about six hundred measurement tons. Her freight was about one hundred and twenty thousand Spanish milled dollars, a large sum for those days. After the fifth voyage, she was sold to Mr. Haskett Derby, of Salem, who made a voyage in her to Rio, thence to London and Lisbon. At the latter place, he invested his funds in merino sheep at very high cost, but not too high, if the season of the year had been the early spring, instead of early winter. Upon ar-

living in New York, Mr. Derby found himself embarrassed for want of accommodations for his large flock. The Government allowed him a space near the then Custom House, upon which to erect buildings for temporary shelter. The temperature became so cold, and so different from the usual climate of Portugal, that it was next to impossible by artificial means to protect such delicately constituted animals; and a large, nay, much the largest, number perished. The consequence was, Mr. Derby made a bad business of it; and the Mount Hope changed hands, and was turned into a whaleman.

There were other distinguished merchants in Newport; viz. Messrs. Christopher Champlin, George Champlin, Samuel Vernon, Robert Stevens, sen., Deblois, and others. The elder Mr. Champlin headed the list. It was said of him, that he never would permit a vessel of his to go to sea on a Friday. Whether this idiosyncrasy grew out of some painful association in his mind relating to "Good Friday," or from some other cause, I was never able to determine. Mr. George Champlin, a most quiet, unobtrusive man, exerted an admirable influence in the



town by his uniform fairness in his daily business. He never wronged in number, weight, or measure, or in his landmarks and shipmarks. He never demanded more for an article than he was willing to take, expecting to be beaten down. He never made work for lawyers: if he ever sought one, it was more to have the advantage of his services as a mediator, than as an advocate. He, indeed, was a true representative of the "good merchant." Mr. Robinson Potter, S. T. Northum, Bowen & Ennis, Henry Bull, and many others, gave celebrity to "little Rhody." Messrs. Brown & Ives, and Clarke & Nightingale, of Providence, had large dealings with Newport.

The coasting trade added immensely to the life of the place. Most of the importations from abroad were sent off in schooners and sloops to New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Norfolk, and Alexandria, — consigned principally to Minturn & Champlin, of New York; John Parker, of Boston; John Maybin, of Philadelphia; Henry Payson, of Baltimore; Christopher Fry, of Norfolk; and John G. Ladd, of Alexandria; and the Providence merchants

named above. In return for these shipments, goods suited for foreign markets were ordered. None of the commercial marine of Newport were sent to other ports to be loaded.

Besides the coasting trade, Newport was enlivened from day to day by the arrival and departure of very handsome and commodious packet sloops, used in part as passenger boats; they were elegantly finished and furnished; the latest of these was named the *Golden Age*, which was owned by Captain Perry, who was also proprietor of a line of stages, called the "commercial line," which ran daily between Newport and Boston. This undertaking originated in the hope of avoiding the tedium and great cost attending the stage-coach system of travelling between Boston and New York; and it was soon discovered that the route from Boston *via* Newport and the Sound was vastly the easiest, and was very generally adopted. This arrangement continued until the veteran Bunker brought the old and sure steamer *Connecticut* on the route; and then boating by wind-power very much declined. During the period of "packeting," it was no unusual thing,

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when the wind was at north-east, at Newport, for the best sloops to reach Peck Slip, New York, in sixteen to seventeen hours; and the same from New York, with the wind free and full at south-west, would land passengers in the same time in Newport. This commercial marine record would be imperfect without some reference to the great amount of labor required for repairing, graving, caulking, rigging, loading and unloading, of vessels arriving and departing in the regular way, and for aid to vessels driven into the harbor by stress of weather. In connection with this last class, I well recollect the arrival of a Boston ship, driven into the "West Passage" by a violent gale from south-south-east, and almost stranded whilst in near neighborhood to a dangerous shoal. Intelligence was brought to Newport *viâ* Conannicut. When I heard of the disaster, I asked my employer, Mr. Channing, to allow me time to send off relief. This was granted; and, although the attempt was thought to be fearfully dangerous, I was so successful as to enlist the aid of a dozen experienced seamen, who obtained a stiff and safe sloop, on board of which I placed haw-

sers, a cable, and anchor; and, in a few hours after sunrise, they were under way, and, not long afterwards, were alongside the ship, heavily laden with sugar, and just in time to save her from being stranded. I felt rather elated at my success, especially after having heard, from several sea-captains, all sorts of unfavorable predictions. Had my love of sea adventures been fostered, I might have turned out another Anson or Selkirk, or Captain Dampier; but my wise maternal guardian revered the adage, that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," too well to license any thing like Quixotism in her progeny.

The business of Gibbs & Channing required the daily employment of four truckmen. Their names were Castoff, two Richmonds, and Wilbour. The number of workmen in various offices, on ship-board and on the wharves, averaged fifty. It was quite a sight every Saturday, near sundown, to witness the crowd, now and then a hundred men, who gathered about the counting-house door on the wharf side, to be paid for the week's work. This department was assigned to me for a number of years.

The money was drawn in bills, small denomination, and silver change, from the Bank of Rhode Island, and so arranged as to facilitate the payments in "no time," understood, in my day, to mean the shortest period. The wages at that time were very low, in comparison with the amount paid now,—only five to six shillings per day. But it should be remembered that that sum then would purchase nearly or quite treble what it could obtain now. Whilst in Newport in October, 1864, I heard of one of my old friends, Mr. James Hart,\* almost a centenarian, who was head man amongst the laborers, and upon whom I called. I found him quite feeble in body, but with a memory all alive in respect to matters and things connected with his early days. I thought I would tax this last faculty, and so asked him if he could recollect the sum I used to pay him on Saturdays. He promptly answered, "Five shillings per day." Decimal currency was not in use in my day. How much it would increase the perplexity of shopping to the women of the present day,—what frowning, what taxing of the brain,—were

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\* Died May 1, 1866, aged 99 years, 7 months, and 18 days.

they obliged to calculate, by pounds, shillings, pence, and half-pennies, how much they ought to pay, and how much receive in change! But, in the olden time, perhaps only one of a family would go on a cheapening expedition, while ten remained at home: now, the eleven are more likely to be found hovering round the counters devoted to silk and lace, while house and children are left to the tender mercies of servants.

It has been so common, in statistical records, to couple commerce with manufactures, that it might be deemed a sad loss of memory to treat of one without reference to the other. Well, now, the truth will oblige me to say very little or nothing about spinning or weaving, except in regard to one establishment situated near the town cemetery, called a duck factory, where, for a time, an article was made, in imitation of the Russia fabric; but it never proved remunerative, and was finally abandoned. I can recollect the wonderment which the clattering machinery excited in us, when, on our Saturday afternoon excursions to Miantonomi Hill, &c., we used to stop at the building, and look through the windows, and watch the strange movements

of the machinery within. The spinning-jenny had not been invented. Foreign manufactures of cotton and wool were used by the "richer classes" in the large towns; but the country people depended very much upon domestic spinning and weaving. I recollect we had in our house a loom for weaving silk; but it never yielded more than a braid. But we had cheap and good music, which cost nothing, and so exquisitely soothing, notwithstanding its monotonous vibrations, as always to make it welcome: I refer to the *whiz* from the large old family spinning-wheel. There was a pewter manufactory, where the business was carried on quite extensively. Pewter dishes and pewter plates; mugs, &c., were kept as bright as is silver ware at the present day. Its use lessened very much, as crockery and glass ware became common. I recollect, however, that my grandfather Ellery was accustomed to eat his meat from a pewter plate. The shoe manufacture was quite extensive. Those in Newport who were famous, and not only there, but at the South, were the Carrs, the Lawtons, Rodmans, Burdicks, Dunhams, Pryors, and Manchester.

## CHAPTER IX.

## MECHANICS. — MANUFACTURES.

NEWPORT furnished accomplished workmen in various industrial branches. The cooper's trade was extensive and profitable when the slave-traffic was sanctioned by Government. Hogsheads and smaller casks, calculated to hold New-England rum, the great stimulus to the African trade, not criticised and denounced as at the present day, kept coopers at work night and day. The capital invested in the importation and distilling of molasses was very large, and gave employment to very many skilful operatives, and to quite a number of truckmen, who hardly knew of an idle moment. The manufacture of rum from molasses increased the shipping interests of the town, and more than a dozen vessels were constantly going and coming to and from Cuba and Surinam. The coasting trade also was vastly increased from the same manufacture.



Boat-building constituted a very extensive feature in the mechanical thrift of Newport. It was mainly pursued on Long Wharf and at the Point. Boats were of all sizes and shapes: some, for rough work; others, for pleasure excursions. Often in summer, when the weather was favorable, the inner and outer harbor would appear dotted with such craft. The two fastest boats belonged,—one of them, to the Custom House; the other, to Captain Perry, the owner of the beautiful sloop *Golden Age*, already spoken of. They were rival boats. It was seldom, if ever, that the first was beaten. Her trim, after many experiments and trials in order to obtain the greatest speed, was peculiar,—low at the stern, and high at the bows. Mr. John Slocum, the “boarding” officer of the port, had the control of her. I shall always hold him in grateful remembrance. When he appeared in the street, with beaming face, dressed neatly in semi-Quaker garb, all ready for a trip, the boys, within hearing of his liquid and mellow voice, would run, hoping to obtain a sail. It was not often, however, that this boon was granted; not from any lack of kindness on his

part, but because of the number of applicants, and his unwillingness to show a preference. The broad-beam boats, which are now so common, were unknown sixty years ago. Long boats, of great speed and capacity, were used for transportation of goods from vessels that were too deeply loaded for entrance to the wharves near Thames Street. Perhaps nowhere on the American coast can be found so many sea attractions as around the water-line of Newport. Water excursions were of every-day occurrence. Newport boys were early educated for sea life. They were accustomed, at a very early age, to frequent the wharves, to inhale the sea air, to talk with sailors, listen to their stories, and become interested enough to plan a voyage. As preliminary to a cabin-boy's experience, nothing was more common than for lads to run up the rigging of vessels; and one, I remember, prided himself on having reached the truck, — the mast-head. Many of these Newport boys became first-rate seamen. Pleasure-boating helped lads to become fearless and expert in guiding their tiny barks to the fishing-grounds in the outer harbor, to the "Dump-

lings," "Beaver-tail," &c. They knew how "to luff" in a squall, to sail "close-hauled," or "let off and go free," as suited them best. One of the liveliest and most picturesque scenes, often visible from Fort Adams (dismantled in those days), was, in a pleasant "south-wester," the rapid grouping and parting of the fleet of pleasure-boats, cresting the waves with sea-foam. Things have changed wonderfully from sixty-five years ago. Now, there are large scow-looking boats, and skippers, always on hand in summer-time, to float off, into deep water, pleasure-seekers or fish-seckers, for a reasonable consideration. The only regular barge boat was the one which used to ply between Fort Wolcott (then under the command of Major Francis Jackson, of Revolutionary memory), and the town.

CARPENTERS. — There were but few of these. It was only at long intervals that new houses were built, and generally of very small dimensions. Repairing and fence-making necessarily caused good demand for job-workmen, many of whom became thrifty; and their descendants

are reaping, in many quarters, the fruits of their excellent example and untiring industry. I well recollect three names of most excellent standing; viz., Hammet, Ailman, and Seattle. Lumber was in great demand; this was owing to scarcity of trees on the island, and because land for tillage was worth vastly more than for wood-culture. Rail fences, so common at the period anterior to the Revolution, and which the British destroyed for fuel, led to the substitution of stone walls over all the island. No objects are more striking to those who drive out of town now-a-days, than the massive smooth-faced walls of slate, lining the roads, and constituting the dividing lines between the several estates. I knew several of the name of Swinburne who were caulkers, gravers, and riggers. Mr. Lee, a most excellent man, was the principal mast-maker. Mr. Davenport, who lived near the duck factory, did most of the mason work. Messrs. Cozzens & Weaver manufactured hats. Colonel Tew, Mr. Gould, and Mr. Barbour were the tailors. The cordage-manufacturers were Francis Brinley, Deacon William Tilley, and his sons, George, William, John, Abraham, and Thomas. The

last time I was in Newport, I visited the little tenement just west of the late residence of Mr. Francis Brinley, which, I always understood, was the house of the patriarch Tilley, and where most, if not all, of his children were born. This family, for influence and respectability, was held in great esteem. The cabinet-makers were Coe & Palmer, Lawton, Holmes Weaver, Deacon Vinson, and Mr. Goddard. The beaver-hats in my day were very costly, and worn only by the "dons." Cocked hats, worn by men of age and standing, appeared on state occasions. The common felt hats covered the heads of boys and men who could ill afford high-priced articles. These cheap hats were stiffened with paste and glue (gum shellac being then unknown), and retained their shape no longer than the wind remained at west or north-north-west. A damp "south-wester" and a genuine "south-easter" (very significant terms in my day) would reduce our head-coverings to the most grotesque and forlorn shapes imaginable; and if, upon going to bed, no pains were taken to block out the body and rim, and a north wind, or wind from any neighboring points, were to spring up in the

night, then the hat, when called for in the morning, would be found rigorously opposed to admitting the head. And didn't we cut a figure, as we stemmed the ridicule of those who had learned by experience how to guard their head-gear from the ill effects of a humid atmosphere? The barbers were, Mr. Center, remarkably polite to his customers; Mr. Faisneau, who excelled in the use of the razor and scissors; and Mr. Coggeshall, whose little box of a shop adjoined the open lot, owned by the late Mr. Coe, in Thames Street. He was highly esteemed by economical mothers. His price for boys was only fourpence-halfpenny per head; and, whenever he failed to cut close according to home measurement, we were sent back to receive a few more clips. We were so "shaven and shorn" by Mr. Coggeshall, that when the weather was cold on Sundays, and the meeting-house even colder than the out-door atmosphere, it became the most natural thing in the world to lift one's fingers, nearly frozen, to ascertain if a head remained on our shoulders.

The owners of three valuable estates near to the first beach were induced, after the purchase,

to provide nets or seines, with which to catch manhaden, a species of fish which never failed to come in shoals upon the beach about the close of summer, and which constituted the base of a powerful compost. The seine twine was imported from Europe, and was of great strength. The seines were manufactured by persons experienced in "network." Examining one day an old Sam Johnson's octavo Dictionary, my eye caught the above word, and the old pedant's definition. Of course, a mere boy, I was more perplexed with the definition than with the word, and I had not courage to look up the meaning of the terms used in the explanation of it; hence I concluded to learn it by heart, and to use it whenever I felt like making a display of my learning. Here it is: "Network, any thing reticulated, decussated, between the interstices of the intersections"! The only mathematical instrument maker was Mr. S. King. An image at the door, holding a quadrant, indicated the branch of business to which he was devoted. Each quadrant, compass, and sextant was sent, upon a ship's arrival, to Mr. King for correction and adjustment. W. Cor-

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nell, Nicholas Geffroy, W. Nichols, and Thomas Arnold were manufacturers of jewelry and silver plate. The latter gentleman rendered himself somewhat obnoxious to the rigid sectarians of the day, by too strong an attachment to Mr. Murray, the great Universalist preacher. Notwithstanding this predilection, Mr. Arnold was one of the most reliable of men in his branch (that of silversmith); and I have a sample of his spoons, which have been in wear for four-score years, unique in their shape, but of the purest metal. Chaffee & Lyon were dealers in brass castings, &c. Sailmaking was carried on very extensively by Mr. Spooner. He did a vast amount of work for Gibbs & Channing. I recollect the partial destruction, by a dog belonging to Mr. Spooner, of the record-book of receipts of duck and delivery of sails, from and to Gibbs & Channing; which event, for a time, threatened a legal suit between the parties, but was happily compromised. The saddlery business was under the control of Mr. D. Williams.



## CHAPTER X.

## BUSINESS MEN.

“The good trader is he who wrongs not the buyer in number, weight, or measure. These are the landmarks of all trading, which must not be removed; for such fraud were worse than open felony.”

IT may be a gratification to the few surviving friends who were brought up with me, and to their relatives, to read the names of the principal store and shop keepers, whose places of business were either on the wharves, or in Thames Street; viz., Simeon Martin, Bowen & Ennis, Earl & Allston, Christopher Fowler, Stephen Cahoone, Lopez Dexter & Miles, John Coggeshall, Christopher Rhodes, Gilbert Chase, J. & S. Whitehorne, Saunders Malbone, Mein & Rogers, Samuel Brown, John L. Boss, William Engs, Daniel Sheldon, Nicholas Geffroy, David Thacher, William Langley, Henry Bull, James Taylor, Jabez Dennison, P. O. Richmond, Peter P. Remington, Charles Gyles, S. Ambrose, Thomas Bush, Peter Bours, Luke Bours, Greene

& Tillinghast, Caleb Greene, Benjamin Hadwin, Thomas Hornsby, Chaffee, Peter Kane, Jacob Richardson, Stephen Gould, William Miller, David Wilder, Henry Moore, William Moore, Thomas Mumford, Clarke Cook, Silas Dean, Job Sherman, Nathaniel Sweet, Harvey Sessions, Isaac Gould, Daniel Vaughn, Valentine Whitman, John Barbour, — Dockeray, J. & S. Townsend, and Charles Feke.

Until the enactment of the embargo, under President Madison, no place of the size of Newport, on the seaboard, was more distinguished for commercial activity than "little Rhody." After the removal of the embargo, there was a slight re-action, but nothing to indicate the previous prosperity; and finally, when the few remaining capitalists withdrew from business pursuits, the town subsided into comparative inaction. Subsequently, a move was made in furtherance of the whale-fishery. This, however, failed to be productive, and was abandoned.

## CHAPTER XI.

## MARKETS.

THERE were only two public places appointed for the sale and purchase of provisions, when I was a boy; viz., that on Ferry Wharf, a one-story building, now turned into a police station. By *provisions*, I mean every description of meat, poultry, game; fish of all kinds; and pure white corn-meal, peculiar to the island. I ought to say a word more about the fish market. Accounts have been sent from Havana, more or less exaggerated, of the surpassing excellence of the fish for sale in that city; but I will venture to affirm, that, in quality, freshness, and variety, no fish market could have excelled that at Newport. There are those living who will testify to the rich banquet provided by our old friend, Thomas Townsend, whose selection of tautog for broiling, bass for boiling, and perch for frying, was always of the

best. Besides, Newport held the monopoly of the turtle trade. Our vessels were actively employed in bringing from Nassau, and neighboring ports, fruits and turtle. Soup, that *was soup*, could be had, of the most delicious flavor. The turtle was of the green species, and of peculiar richness. It required, however, a Rhode-Island colored cook to manufacture from it a soup that would satisfy the taste of the lovers of good living of that day. Before the wooden bridge was swept out to sea, which connected the island with Tiverton, nothing was more common, after the arrival of live turtle, than for the "lords of' creation" at that day to arrange for a turtle-soup dinner at the bridge: the dinner of course included game, common to the island, and the best of wines from Madeira and Cadiz. I am not stating this luxurious mode of living as commendable, but in order that the similarity of the habits of the past and present may be duly noted by the reader. I must say a word about the fruit which was cultivated on the island and in the town. The greening apple was the great staple, whether for the production of cider or for house use,

and had a zest which increased rather than satisfied the appetite. Next to the apple was the "Gardner" pear, incomparable for its beauty and flavor. There were peaches, too, more luscious than any of Southern growth; and what clime save Newport ever yielded such quinces? Sugar being comparatively cheap, say six to eight cents per pound for brown, and eight to eleven cents for white, almost every householder could afford to preserve the best of such fruit, and to manufacture from it three grades of marmalade. The highest grade was made from the fruit when perfectly *cored*, and deposited in a brass or copper kettle, first subjected to a severe polish. A little pure water covered the bottom of the vessel, and then the sugar and fruit were added; when fire sufficient to cause boiling would reduce the mass to a rich dark jelly. The second and third grades were made from the core and peel: these were stewed in molasses, and thought quite good enough for children. The preserving process consisted in first parboiling the *whole* quince before removing the skin, and then quartering and peeling it, removing the core, and placing the quarters

upon a flat dish to cool. The sirup, free from scum and semi-transparent, being ready in a *bell-metal* skillet, each piece of the prepared quince was dropped gently into it, and then watched until it changed from a cream color to a light pink. It was, and continues to be, one of the most delicious preserves. Tumblers were used for the deposit and safe keeping of this fruit, properly secured from the air.

Having in my boyhood witnessed all that is above described, I thought my recollection of such valuable receipts might sharpen the appetite of some of the new-comers, to whom they are kindly submitted.

The greengage plum, a very rich fruit, was quite common in the gardens in the town. The black-heart or mazard cherry, grown on the island, was as good as the best. It was so wholesome that any quantity might be eaten without harm. Another pear, which I had almost forgotten, was the St. Germain. It had a very marked flavor.

The brick market, now the City Hall, at the foot of the Parade, notwithstanding its basement was used for nearly half a century for

the sale of meat, has been considered an architectural gem, even by Mr. Allston. It was a place of resort, at early morning, by epicures (and there were many in Newport), in search of the choicest cuts of beef and mutton. The latter, particularly, was excellent, raised upon the island, and slaughtered near home. The oxen were corn-fed, and, when exposed in the shambles, exhibited a "mixture" very delectable in the eyes of critical gastronomists. Rhode Island had always been famous for poultry, and up to this day has not lost its reputation, as the season of Thanksgiving in Massachusetts abundantly proves. And what shall be said of Rhode-Island cookery, — especially that within the circle of Newport? It commanded universal favor. There were no "tin kitchens" then to dry up the birds, large and small; but roasting was done on a long spit, arranged for rotatory motion, upon two large kitchen andirons, having crotchet supports. In many cases, smoke-jacks were used; in others, weights became the moving power. The meat, whilst being cooked, was always exposed to the open air of the room. Now, reader, suspend your

admiration a little, while the poultry has been made ready, artistically trussed, every pinfeather extracted, the fire charmingly ignited, the baster, salt-box, and dredging-box close at hand, and the jack trotting its mystic revolutions; and how long, think you, before you will see a rich "puff," and enjoy a culinary aroma, beyond the knowledge, or even the imagination, of any modern gourmand?

The second and third stories of the market building were used for a theatre. Here, for several seasons, the celebrated "Hodgkinson company" delighted our admiring eyes. It was only a miniature "playhouse," for so it used to be called; but it was charmingly cosey, and the audience seemed to feel that they received a full equivalent for the price of admittance. If the play happened to be dull, the dress circle, so called, filled with the beauty for which Newport was so famous, more than compensated for scenic and dramatic deficiencies. The entertainments were of the most respectable type, and always closed at an early hour. I well recollect a juvenile performer, named Dickenson. He was a poor boy, just from England; and,



upon hearing that a company of comedians were at Newport, he found his way there, and was employed for a time, changing scenes, snuffing candles, &c. There were no lamps then in use, excepting for the "foot-lights." Candles had the preference. After a brief trial, Mr. Hodgkinson, the manager, discovered in young Dickenson an undeveloped talent for impersonating old men; and very shortly his name was on the play-bill. It was his first appearance; and so remarkable was his representation of the character assigned him, that he became the "old man" in every play,—the hero of the stage,—though only nineteen years of age. After unwearied efforts in his profession, Mr. Dickenson gained not only renown in genteel comedy, but wealth, and, better than wealth, the esteem of the citizens in his adopted home, Boston, changing his name to Dickson; and where he became an extensive importer of fancy goods from England, and lived many years in the enjoyment of a well-earned reputation and an ample fortune.

## CHAPTER XII.

## SOCIAL INTERCOURSE.

NEWPORT people, in the olden time, were seldom, if ever, moved to extravagant demonstrations of hilarity. The restraints upon the young, excepting the two gala-days, "Election" and the "Fourth of July," kept them within bounds; and the more advanced, trained in their youth to domestic duties, seldom sought amusement abroad. In fact, Newport life, as I remember it, was prosy enough. It is true, there were entertainments provided by men of wealth,—whist clubs, for instance; on which occasions, elaborate dinners were given, and houses consequently turned upside-down. At these parties, confined to the male sex, there was an immense consumption of wine and punch; and when the dinner closed, generally on the verge of night, some one of the company would rise, and announce the crowning toast (ascribed

to General Knox, of "Revolutionary" celebrity), "Sup where we have dined, with cards." The company would then adjourn to a room already prepared, and commence shuffling and dealing cards until near midnight, when the rites of Bacchus would be observed over the flowing bowl. Others, of less means, had their sideboards well stocked with stimulating beverages; viz., Jamaica and St. Croix spirit, Hollands gin, brandy, sherry, port, and Madeira wine, Brown stout, &c., &c.: and with these entertained their guests or callers by easier methods. When friends made an evening visit, the first words uttered, after shaking hands, were, "What will you take?"

For children, a dancing-school was kept in "Penrose Hall," in Church Lane, by Monsieur Carpentier, where lads and lasses were taught graceful motion. Although the teacher was lame, he was wonderfully successful in his art. Monsieur Carpentier was also employed in many families as an instructor of the French language. Dufief's "Nature Displayed" was the text-book.

The monotonous aspects of society were now

and then disturbed by the arrival of some harlequin company, or of a sagacious elephant, or learned pig. Concerning the elephant, I have a reminiscence to relate. Amongst my childish reading, anecdotes concerning animals, especially those which represented them as talking and acting very much like human beings,—*vide* the fables of those times,—suited my boyish tastes; and when, one morning on the way to school, my eye was arrested by a huge picture of an elephant, to be seen within for a quarter of a dollar, children half price (that is ninepence, New England currency), I thought no more of my studies that day, but only of the picture. I owned a silver ninepence, part of a gift of a near and dear relative, who was rich, and who made my mother a visit annually. My small coin burned in my pocket during school-time; and when, upon leaving, I told a playmate my intention of seeing the great sight, he said I had better let him go first, and he would tell me all about it. I, not imagining that I was to be choused out of the promised pleasure, handed him the Spanish “bit,” expecting, of course, it would be returned in due time. Then, for the

first time, I understood the meaning of the slang word "sell." I never saw the elephant! My vision wonderfully improved after this experience.

"Tea parties" constituted one of the prominent features of my early life. They were formal enough to satisfy the most rigid asceticism. Urbanity formed no part of our early training. To be natural was next to being called a "natural-born fool." It was an age of pure art,—the art of walking *uprightly*, with *unbending* joints; the art of shaking hands after the "pump-handle" formula; the art of looking inexpressibly indifferent towards everybody and every thing. Let me describe very briefly one of these fashionable gatherings. The hour was prudent,—about 7 P.M. in winter. No *entertainments* of the kind were given in summer. The ladies' costume seldom exceeded in richness an English cotton cambric, having a broad hem, or, a still greater extravagance, a single flounce, with short sleeves, long white kid gloves, white cotton stockings, and shoes with sharp-pointed toes. Mr. Geffroy or Mr. Cornell bored ears, and furnished rings to any pattern,

according to the taste and means of the applicant. Young girls and aged fashionables wore round the neck strings of gold beads, the largest in the centre. When the company had assembled, the reception-room being ready, with high-back chairs placed in close order round the room, near to the wall, every one took the seat most agreeable to himself. No one stood: it was not thought genteel. No one vacated a seat to an elder, or to a superior in mental acquirements or social position; for such a movement would have been fraught with embarrassment. All, then, present being starched to the wall, and perfect silence reigning, a side door would be set ajar, and gradually opened for the *entrée* of tea on one waiter, and sugar and cream upon another. As it seldom happened that all were accommodated at the first round with a cup of either chulan, hyson, or gunpowder; of course the supplying of each with two or three cups was a work of time. With the addition of eatables of all sorts and in the greatest profusion, the whole constituted a feast fit for the gods, provided the gods lived, breathed, and drank *sub silentio*. Now and then a whis-

per might be heard; but, as a general rule, any deviation from the strictest formality was discouraged. As no one changed places, it often happened that two taciturn persons would sit in close proximity for a whole evening without uttering a word. Instead of modern laughter, volubility, and perpetual motion, the *silent* seasons of our time were awfully repellent to the young, who nevertheless had not sufficient courage to break the spell. Boys, if admitted into so serene an atmosphere, were required "to be seen, and not heard." Woe to the young adventurer who happened to arrive at one of these solemn moments, when only one chair was vacant, and every eye was surveying him from head to foot, and he not knowing how to dispose of himself in the centre of the room! I repeat, woe to such a one, with neck-cloth tight, hands straight and rigid as those of poor Bob Acres in the play, and with face of crimson dye!—woe to this poor victim of Puritan frigidity. At the proper time, nuts, raisins, figs, and apples were distributed; and, for a time, the movement relieved the irksomeness of the scene. When, at about the close of such *festivities*,

things were growing hopeless, some one, having no respect for good manners, would propose the singing of a song. A pause ensued; eyes were cast down. A dead silence prevailed, until, encouraged by a sudden rustling of dresses and the moving of chairs, a voice struck up "In the downhill of life," then "Erin go Bragh," "Fresh and Strong," increasing the volume of sound to an indescribable degree, and "Meeting of the Waters," and finally winding up with "Adams and Liberty," — the same tune, I believe, which now bears the title of "Star-spangled Banner." But no response, as in these days of huzzas, greeted the *unwearied* friends of song.

In the course of each winter, there were held "subscription assemblies," — the last one being Washington's birth-night ball, — when were provided sundry huge loaves of frosted plum-cake, manufactured by "the Duchess,"\* the most celebrated cake-maker in Rhode Island. The work

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\* This excellent woman was universally known in the town, and universally beloved. Late in life, she occupied a small house in School Street, still standing, and there annually entertained three families (whom she had faithfully served, until made free) with a most sumptuous "tea-drinking." She was long a member of Dr.



was done in our kitchen, having an ample oven, and required a day and night for its completion. Owing to the scarcity of public carriages in the town, there being but two, — one owned by Mr. Place (an old and highly respected hackman), and the other driven from Townsend's Coffee House, by a young man named Drummond, — it became necessary to give early notice of the day and hour when the assembly was to take place, so that no delay in conveying the company to Masonic Hall might occur. The transportation, accordingly, commenced at the hour of 6 P.M., and occupied over two hours. When

Pattin's church; and, at her funeral, there were present a large number of the most respectable and influential families in Newport. She was buried in the ground appropriated without distinction to all the inhabitants.

A humble slab points to the place of this Christian woman's interment, having on it the following inscription, written by the late William E. Channing: —

In memory of  
 DUCHESS QUAMINO, a free Black,  
 of distinguished excellence;  
 Intelligent, industrious, affectionate, honest, and of exemplary piety;  
 who deceased  
 June 29, 1804, aged 65 years.

“Blest thy slumbers in this house of clay,  
 And bright thy rising to eternal day.”

the company had assembled, a rule, previously adopted, was carried out, — that of drawing for partners for the first two dances. By this arrangement, the least comely of the company were sure of dancing twice ; and very often *they* were on the floor for many other dances, their agreeable conversation compensating for any lack of personal charms. Waltzes and polkas were unknown ; and hardly had cotillons become popular. I can only recollect the minuet, country dance, and reel.

Boys and girls had their amusements and games. Now and then, some ventriloquist or juggler would appear, and announce a series of performances, — all the more agreeable in proportion to their inexplicability.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## LEGAL PUNISHMENTS.

I HAVE given, in a previous section, some of my early recollections of home and school government. In stating, as I propose doing, facts with regard to the methods adopted for enforcing criminal jurisprudence, I shall doubtless, in my inferences, startle a few of my contemporaries, whose memory of by-gones may be less tenacious than my own.

An early impression, which experience has never weakened, convinced me, that moral suasion, had school-teachers and parents been willing to use it, would have proved vastly more effectual, in counteracting youthful indiscretions, than the adopted idea of the child's innate preference of wrong to right, and hence the necessity of anticipating misdemeanors by suspicious looks and querulous tones. Now, the effect of this *espionage* upon children was to inaugurate a

systematic duplicity, which, with the frequent allusion to the "rod in pickle," fairly turned the house and schoolroom into places of almost justifiable rebellion. I cannot help believing, that confidence manifested to the young by parents and teachers would have prevented a multitude of criminal delinquencies cognizable by the courts.

The public modes of punishment established by law were four; viz., executions by hanging, whipping of men at the cart-tail, whipping of women in the jail-yard, and the elevation of counterfeiters and the like to a movable pillory platform, which turned on its base at the bidding of the officer, so as to front north, south, east, and west, in succession, remaining at each point a quarter of an hour. During this exhibition of the majesty of the law, the neck of the culprit was bent to a most uncomfortable curve, presenting a facial mark for those salutations of stale eggs, which seemed to have been *preserved* for the occasion. Once, I remember, the sentence included branding. The place selected for the infliction of this punishment was in front of the State House. This building included a

Court House, a hall for military drill, also for itinerant preaching when Whitefield and Murray "contended for the faith," according to their own peculiar views; where the sage "Town Council" met once a month; and, finally, where the town meetings were held, generally under the leadership of Messrs. Thomas Pitman, who lived in Broad Street, and of Daniel Dunham, who lived in Thames, I believe on the corner of Bridge Street. They were two noted politicians of the Republican type. They held the reins in town affairs for many years; did about all the town talking; and, in fact, kept things so straight, that none of opposite political opinions felt it worth while to question their decisions.

Besides the use of the pillory, the minor transgression of theft was dealt with by whipping the culprit after a pattern peculiar to Rhode Island; viz., fastening his hands to the tail of a cart, and drawing him along on his feet by horse-power, to prescribed distances, in Thames and Spring Streets; then and there administering the legal number of stripes on the bare back. The more private method for the correction of

female delinquents was of a milder character, dispensed in the jail-yard, in presence of many witnesses of the same sex, or was commuted to imprisonment in the common jail, or to confinement in coops at the almshouse, and where inebriates met with well-deserved punishment. Inebriety upon the homœopathic scale, such as simple reeling or an occasional sprawl, as the *spirit* moved, were held to be venial offences. As for a temperance lecture, nothing of the kind was ever deemed necessary or proper: the very suggestion would have been thought to evince greater insanity than that which it proposed to remove. Roger Williams's crowning idea was liberty in its most comprehensive sense. Having felt the sting of persecution in Massachusetts, he looked more leniently than he would otherwise have done upon a habit which has done more to demoralize humanity than any other that can be named.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## INSANITY.

ONE of the mightiest and holiest distinctions of the present age is the universal expression and manifestation of sympathy in behalf of public institutions for the relief and cure of the insane. The wonderful contrast between a former age—the age to which these pages refer—and this hallowed time of benevolent enterprises can hardly be measured. I perfectly well recollect instances of men and women being inclosed in strait-jackets, chained to staples in the centre of the rooms, in the midst of filth, and subjected to an atmosphere fearfully offensive. In one case, that of a highly respectable and intelligent woman, I became deeply interested. The house where she was confined was just in the rear of my mother's residence. She was the daughter of a minister, whose peculiar doctrinal views, especially those

relating to what was then termed "the unpardonable sin," so influenced a naturally excitable temperament as to induce insanity of the worst type. Her father, feeling wholly unable to control her madness, confided her to the care of kind but very ignorant people, who could merely furnish food for the body; and even that was so poorly served as to be revolting to one whose appreciation of what was neatly prepared and palatable was as keen as ever. No medication was deemed necessary; and hence no earnest efforts were made to remove or to lessen the offensive features of her prison-house. When she slept, it was generally found that her resting-place was the bare floor. A miserable bed there was, but too uninviting even for *her* wearied frame. From being handsome, she became, in a year or two, the most haggard, attenuated, and wild-looking creature my eyes ever beheld. Her clothes often remained unchanged for weeks. Being well acquainted with the family who had charge of her, I often saw her, almost always in a standing position. Lad as I was, the scene is as vivid in my old age as it was in my youth. The effect of this lady's



early religious training cropped out continually in her prayers, and most heart-searching they were; in her praises, sometimes exultant, and then sad and moody. Her quotations from Scripture were apt and forcible, harmonizing as she frequently did the Old and New Testaments. I frequently listened to her outbursts of indignation at every species of wrong and falsehood; and then immediately would follow expressions of tenderness towards human infirmity, which a flood of tears would intensify, prompting a prayer for the delinquent, and gesticulations as if she apprehended for him some dreadful calamity. I drank in all the by-play of this, to me, fearful drama. She was an object of pity, but not of intelligent charity. I saw her one day in her dreary chamber, on her knees, murmuring what was to me a dead language. It was the usual hour of the evening meal. She grasped from the hands of the attendant the tin vessel containing prepared tea, and, after a moment's silence, recited that portion of the Apocalypse where the church of the Laodiceans is rebuked for its lukewarmness; and then, with fiery vehemence, she burst forth,

“So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth,” and, suiting the action to the words, dashed the whole of the tea into the attendant’s face.

It was an age when the healing art was confined to physical disease. Mental derangements, to most observers, seemed to be akin to demonology; and the notion existed, that, as the apparent sufferer was mentally dead, physical suffering, or the consciousness of pain, must in such case be impossible, and hence the absence of any attempt to lessen the unfortunate patient’s sufferings.

There were not, perhaps, more insane persons in Newport, in proportion to its population, than in other towns; but somehow the number of these and of idiotic cases, who were allowed to walk the streets, and to become familiar with persons whom they met, were very numerous. Many of these found their home at the “poor-house,” and others were cared for at private residences. There was one lunatic, *Moody* by name, and moody by nature, who was carefully shunned, especially by children; and yet he was

never known to have committed any act of violence. He was very tall, with a gigantic frame and hairy visage. His head, which was huge and bushy, was always uncovered. He strode about with the air of one who is the "owner of all he surveys." Owing to his great height, he was able to peer into gardens, and to frighten by his haggard looks whoever might be there. There was another case, that of a young woman by the name of Sally Hastings, who, with her mother, Prudence, lived at the almshouse, both with wandering propensities. Sally was in person very masculine; and, owing to her unbounneted head and dishevelled hair, none were very ready to accost her. Her insanity was caused by a lover's treachery. The almshouse being contiguous to the town's burial place, Sally spent much of her time in reading epitaphs; some of them prompting a laugh, others a sigh or a tear. There was a genuine oddity, whose home was in Thames, fronting Mary Street. He had a most erratic way of demonstrating his weak-mindedness or insanity; viz., running into houses, opening doors into chambers, closets, &c., never touching or disturb-

ing any thing, and leaving the premises as noiselessly as he entered. There was a man of a similar type, who was full of projects. Some were so extraordinary as to subject him to the nickname of "Crazy Sam." Once, however, he obtained the title of "Conjurer." It was owing to a notion he entertained that a wink or blink of the eye was an unpardonable offence. Being in a field at haymaking, he observed a young lad with eyes opening and shutting with frightful rapidity. In a moment, it occurred to this monomaniac, that he could cure the distemper, as he called it; when, turning to the boy, he said, "Josh, did you ever see a toad wink in a dark entry?" A negative answer prompted the order to find a toad at once, and remove it to a perfectly dark room or entry, and he, Josh, would see a most remarkable phenomenon. The boy having caught the animal, and retired with it into total darkness, after *staring* for a great while, and not discovering any thing remarkable, he thought it must be owing to the eyes of the toad being averted from him; and so down on his knees he dropped, and went crawling in every direction for the longed-for sight, *staring*

and *staring*, until he felt a strange sensation in his eyes, a fixedness or rigidity in the lids, which led him to forego any further acquaintance with the detestable worm-catcher, and to go at once into the light; when, lo! he discovered his infirmity was cured.

## CHAPTER XV.

## POLITICS.

“Count not a courtier’s promise, that he is bound to prefer thee. Seeing compliments oftentimes die in the speaking, why should thy hopes live longer than the hearing?”

I WAS brought up amidst the most jarring political events. Upon the closing scenes of Washington’s administration, there quickly followed the initiation of measures, and the avowal of principles, quite opposite to the formula laid down by Mr. Adams, who had triumphed over Virginia’s favorite son; and hence the formation of two schools of politics,—the one, “Federal,” close, and conservative; the other, “Republican,” liberal, and radical. The ruling spirit of the first was Hamilton; of the last was Jefferson. One of the most exciting causes of dissension was Jay’s treaty. I shall never forget the evening when Mr. Jay was burnt in effigy. It was in 1795, upon his return from England. The people interested in this demonstration of opposition to the Government

rallied under the Jeffersonian banner, met in the neighborhood of my mother's house. The name of the patriot, then to be branded as a traitor to the cause of liberty, was placarded in large capitals, and attached to the breast of the effigy. The dress was of *courtly* style, and on the head was the "cocked hat" of the day. Behind the figure were two disguised musicians, discoursing with drum and fife, most hideously, the "Rogue's March." From that time, and until I bade adieu to my native place, politics raged in every house, office, shop, bank, and church. Lines of separation were rigidly drawn between the two contending parties. Business relations even were suspended. Intermarriages were interdicted, and neighborly visiting interrupted. The only neutral ground, so far as the clergy was concerned, was the church. No reference was made there to agitating topics. The minister might battle in support of his peculiar views of religious doctrine, and call John Murray to account for his heresies; but he could not pecuniarily afford to adopt Mr. Jefferson's admission,—"We are all Federalists; we are all Republicans." An avowal of such a dogma would

have reduced his "living" to starvation point. Even I, a luckless wight, did not escape political contempt; simply, because my name bore close resemblance to the *Tory* Premier of England, — "George Canning." The then postmaster of Newport, a rabid Republican (the term Democrat was not then in use), uniformly called me, derisively, by that name.

Belonging, as I did, to the Federal or John Adams party, I worked with my elders with great zeal. I had an ardent temperament, and anxiously waited for the time when I could cast my first vote. Previously, I constituted one of a company of electioneering juveniles. It was made their duty to wait upon aged and infirm voters of the right stamp, and accompany them to the polls. One of these, Mr. Jabez Dennison, I was directed to attend; a most excellent man, and universally respected, excepting *on voting days*. He was partially paralyzed on one side, and suffered from a contraction of his fingers. Previous to reaching the State House, I placed in the hand least affected the State "prox," so called, which he retained; but, whilst working our way up to the moderator's stand, a mis-



chievous person, aware of the infirmity of my aged friend, forced into his hand three opposition tickets, without his knowledge, so that he dropped into the box, which happened to be then empty, four votes instead of one, which caused some disturbance; but as only one of the tickets was endorsed by the voter, *a legal exaction*, it was perceived most clearly that no fraud was intended, and the trouble subsided. I make mention of this political incident merely to show how party firebrands were manufactured "in the days when *we* were young."

Town-meetings offered easy opportunities for the exercise of fisticuffs. The taste for ardent spirit could be easily indulged, as each party kept open house in the neighborhood of the State House; and hence only a short time was required to effect a collision between such warring elements. The combatants were generally selected by each party for the ring, whose boxing qualities were well known. One of these conflicts I well recollect. It took place in Washington Street, on the "Point." Captain M. and Mr. L. were the contestants. The backers were numerous, and terribly excited. As Captain M.

aimed a blow at his opponent, the latter, not liking the sinewy look of the arm, jerked himself aside at the moment of danger, thus precipitating his adversary to the ground, and greatly injuring him by the fall. The coward, a Republican, got a severe handling; and an adjournment to the Court House was agreed upon, where fresh fights continued until dark. Political profits and losses were estimated by this anti-peace method!

The general election, appointed by the charter of King Charles II., occurred the first Wednesday in May. This event brought together the executive departments, representatives from all parts of the State, including New Shoreham, or Block Island, quite out at sea. The governor and staff occupied the principal rooms in Townsend's Coffee House; and as, during a series of years, the town of Providence furnished the candidates for gubernatorial honors, the day previous to the election proved as bustling in the town as the day following,—so many packets arriving with flying colors, crowded with passengers, bringing to the capitol the dignity and wisdom of the State. It was expected of his

excellency, in virtue of the sum of four hundred dollars, his annual salary, that he would keep open house at Townsend's, for the refreshment of his constituency on election day. The escort from the governor's quarters to the State House consisted of the artillery company, under Colonel Fry; and, previous to their departure, they were regaled, as they stood in front of the Coffee House, with a glass of wine, the *liberal* gift of his excellency, handed round by colored waiters. In return for this allowance, the infantry fired several rounds of cartridges, and then the line of march commenced. After the governor and staff followed the senators and representatives elect; the latter holding paper packages containing the votes or prox of each town. The idea of making election returns to the secretary of state by a town clerk was, up to the time of which I am speaking, not dreamed of in Rhode Island,—the last State which adhered to the ancient charter from England. After the votes were canvassed, and the result announced by the committee, proclamation was ordered to be made by the sheriff of the county from the balcony of the State House. It occurred to this

officer, or rather to his deputy, John Richards, that, as the governor was an acknowledged *bon vivant*, it would be well to add to the customary prayer of "God save the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations," the words "FOR THE YEAR ENSUING," which was done audibly, and caused a marked sensation.

The mutual hostility, already alluded to, was expressed as freely in the House of Representatives of the State, as at town or county meetings. The debaters were able men. Amongst them I well recollect Burgess, Searle, Mason, Bridgham, Hazard, Robbins, Hunter, Bourne, E. R. Potter, and Turtelot. One officious member, a Republican, would, as opportunity offered, boast of his tender-heartedness, of his readiness to commiserate and relieve the oppressed and down-trodden, which vaunting never failed to kindle the ire of Mason, and to point his satire, as he charged this "*benevolent*, Christian gentleman" with sundry most antichristian acts towards disabled slaves, during that hellish "MIDDLE PASSAGE," with which the *tender-hearted* and *honorable gentleman* was most intimately acquainted; and which charge was never parried nor denied.

The party strife which ran so high in New-  
rt, when even debates were not free from  
ensive personalities, raged almost as strongly  
enever the Legislature met in Providence,  
uth Kingston, or Bristol.

Owing to the poverty of the State, the honor-  
le Senate, composed of ten or twelve members  
xclusive of the governor, attorney-general,  
asurer, and clerk), were occasionally made, by  
der of the "lower house," a *standing* body.  
his happened whenever the above popular  
dy wished the Senate to meet them in "grand  
mmittee." To make this statement clear to  
e present generation, I must tell them, that,  
the House of Representatives, there was no  
ised chair, or rostrum, for the speaker, but  
ly a long table in the centre of the hall; so  
at instead of having sufficient number of  
airs for distinguished visitors, or for law offi-  
rs, or especially for the accommodation of the  
onorable the Senate" when asked to pay  
e House a visit, the former were compelled,  
on every such occasion, to stand in their  
aces until their accustomed seats were trans-  
rred to the Representative Chamber by mes-

sengers in waiting; and when the session of the "grand committee!" was closed, then senators, &c., were again compelled to stand and be gazed at, until the said noble seats were made ready for them in the upper house. So, for less than fifty dollars, the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations suffered its dignity to collapse now and then, and to become the laughing-stock of the people, during the whole of its corporate existence under the charter.

The State recognized, as a portion of its legislative apparatus, a legal adviser entitled "attorney-general." He attended all the sessions of the General Assembly, and prepared or revised most of the bills and resolves offered for adoption. This arrangement was wise, as it lessened very much the chances of appeals and amendments. The first session, always held in Newport, which never lasted over a week, was devoted to the election of officers civil and military, of caucus candidates for every county and town in the State. It was a critical time, when political power was centred in the hands of a few chosen ones, who were prone to use it with immitigable rigor.

There were only two parties in Rhode Island; , the Federal and Republican. Lines were y strictly drawn, as I have already intimated. e title of Democrat had not yet become a inctive epithet. Mr. Jefferson never used term. With him originated the happy allu- n to national unity, "We are all Federalists; are all Republicans:" signifying the possi- ty of enjoying a strong as well as liberal ernment. But this halcyon period never minated "whilst we were boys," nor since. e dogma prevailed then, and prevails still, t the blessing of political liberty must ever end upon "Argus-eyed" opposition of the is" to the "outs;" that, however painful party afflicts, they must be patiently borne, as the ce of civil purification.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the intense itement which was kindled in Newport by a ies of letters, published, I think, in the "New- t Mercury," a paper of unquestionable au- rity with the Federal party, signed N. Gef- y and Nich's Geffroy, implicating President ferson's political orthodoxy. Mr. Geffroy was respectable gold and silver smith, and lived

next to the open lot in Thames Street, on which stands the house once occupied by Jahleel Brenton, afterwards by Mr. Walter Channing, and since then by Mr. Coe. Mr. Geffroy's name was used to conceal that of the real author; for Mr. Geffroy was not intellectually capable of producing such political libels. Notwithstanding the unwearied efforts to trace the misrepresentations to the true source, nothing reliable could be discovered. Among those suspected was Mr. John Rutledge, of South Carolina, a summer visitor at Newport. Mr. Rutledge's anger was so excited against his supposed maligner, a senator from Rhode Island, that he inflicted upon him severe chastisement. I cannot recall the exact drift of these political firebrands; but I well recollect the eagerness of both parties to obtain, from week to week, the newspaper which was made the medium for communicating them to the public.

Other causes of party embroilment existed, and were every day at work alienating members of religious societies, and friends hitherto, and disturbing the peace of neighborhoods. The Republican party assumed the exclusive right



and title of "liberty men," and manifested their partisanship by erecting in various sections of the town "liberty poles." These exhibitions were offensive to the "Federal clique," and measures not always peaceable were adopted for their removal. Tempestuous nights were sometimes selected for these raids; and, besides these, lampoons in doggerel measure appeared almost every week in the opposing paper.

The tragic event which resulted in the death of young Austin, by Mr. Selfridge, in State Street, Boston, Aug. 4, 1806, roused a most vindictive spirit between the two political organizations then existing throughout New England. The collision in Boston was caused by vehement discussions in the "Chronicle," edited by Mr. Benjamin Austin, the father of the deceased, in behalf of the cause of Republicanism; and by a publication in the "Boston Gazette," the warm advocate of Federalism. The altercation was very bitter and personal, and implicated Mr. Selfridge's honesty. After Mr. Selfridge's trial for manslaughter, and his acquittal, he very imprudently visited Newport, the hotbed of political contention, and about the worst place

of refuge he could possibly have chosen. Upon his landing at the wharf, all things having been prepared for his reception, he was met by an excited populace, who, after some collision, permitted him to pass unharmed to his lodgings at Mrs. Rogers', corner of Thames and Mary Street; and nothing further transpired until late at night, when a large number of persons, qualified to discourse the music of Pandemonium, assembled at the aforementioned residence, and made night hideous with their unearthly sounds. Whilst this concert was going on, another feature of the programme was being enacted. An effigy of Mr. Selfridge, prepared during the evening, had been carried in a very noiseless manner to the State House; and, by the help of ladders, was suspended by the neck from the balcony. This effort to disgrace Mr. Selfridge was rendered abortive, in consequence of the proverbially early rising of Mr. Charles Feke, a noted apothecary, who, upon removing his shop-shutters at his residence on the Parade, discovered the figure of a man hanging by the neck from that lofty elevation; and, as the keys of the State House were de-

posited by Sheriff Dennis with him for safe keeping, he hastened to the spot; and, upon discovering its character and its purpose, he cut it down, and threw it into the cellar before any one had been permitted to see it. The disappointment of the parties interested found expression in every kind of expletive. Mr. Selfridge left town early the next morning.

The persistent antagonism between the two leading powers of Europe, viz. England and France, growing out of the "Orders in Council," on the one hand, and the "Berlin and Milan Decrees," on the other, were continually subjecting American commerce to serious interruptions, placing our "marine" between two fires abroad, and kindling political torches at home. Party spirit was born when the confederacy drew its first breath, and will never die out so long as there is an office of profit or of ambition undisposed of, or a national treasury unexhausted.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## JEWS AND THEIR SYNAGOGUE.

HAVING received the best portion of my mercantile education from Jews, I desire to offer a tribute of gratitude for their kindness to me during my apprenticeship.

Mr. Joseph Lopez, kinsman of Moses and Aaron Lopez, was chief clerk in the counting-house of Gibbs & Channing, for several years previous to the dissolving of that copartnership. He doubtless became a thorough proficient in book-keeping, under the guidance of his relative, Moses, who was acknowledged to be one of the best of mathematicians and accountants. He and I were mutually attracted. He was deaf, and hence I was constantly exercised in vocal modulation. When my voice was too loud, he would meekly whisper, "Not quite so loud." Sometimes, when he was eager for an answer, I, with boyish impudence, would speak very

low, and then feel conscience-stricken when he ascribed the subdued tone to thoughtlessness. My aged friend, "an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile," felt conscientiously bound to observe the "times and seasons" peculiar to the Mosaic ritual. On Friday afternoons, he left the counting-room about 3 P.M. in winter, and at 5 in summer, in order to prepare for the due observance of the sabbath on the morrow. Passover week, and at the great day of Atonement, my friend would absent himself from business for two or three consecutive days. He was equally conscientious in making up to his employers for his absence on these to him most holy days. During Mr. Gibbs's long business life, he had a singular way of adjusting accounts which he feared, from their long standing, could never be liquidated, save by severe litigation. Some of these bore the following credits: "By death;" "By unable to pay;" "By won't pay." Mr. Lopez, with characteristic exactness, did not deem such settlements *creditable* in an account-book; and so he went to work in a quiet way, and first examined the "By death" item, and, upon corresponding with the supposed de-

funct, soon ascertained that the dead was alive. Mr. Lopez consequently felt it to be his duty to iog the *memory* of the delinquent, stating that Mr. Gibbs, for some reason, had cancelled the debt in the manner stated, which brought a cheerful response, and the payment of the full amount due. The other instances of indebtedness were liquidated in response to similar hints. I recollect once trying my luck with reference to a charge far back in the ledger. It happened in this way: A miller called one day at the store to purchase a piece of ravensduck, with which to make or to repair sails for his windmill; and, having given his name to be entered in the bill, it struck me that I had seen that name before; and, upon turning to the alphabet of the "petty ledger," there it was with an unsettled item, which the old customer, after a few demurs, paid. My employer was pleased with my retentiveness, but thought I had been a little too nice in the matter of interest. Mr. Lopez died not a long time after the events herein recorded of him. In this connection, I recall a proof of the power of my voice, strengthened as it was by such constant exercise in the answers to the fre-

quent questions of Mr. Lopez. A captain, trumpet in hand, came one morning to the foot of "Gibbs's Wharf," to hail his vessel lying off Fort Wolcott; but, failing to make himself heard, I, though only sixteen years of age, said to him, "Let me try." After a little hesitation, he handed me the trumpet; and, at the first cry of "Sail-ho! boat!" the painter was loosened, and the boat aimed for the shore.

Besides the family of Lopez (whose residence was on the north side of the Parade, near the Newport Bank, or in the same building), I was well acquainted with Mr. Moses Seixas, cashier of the Bank of Rhode Island, whose family occupied the bank building on the south side of the Parade. He and his son, Benjamin, who was the teller, were in stature so short, that I thought the vault or safe, which occupied a portion of the cellar and was very shallow, had been constructed with especial reference to their convenience. Directly over the safe, secured to a timber in the ceiling, was a block and tackle, by help of which the heavy iron door was raised from its bed. One set of the bank keys, at the close of bank hours, was regularly left at our

store for safe keeping by the teller. On the Jewish sabbath (Saturday), I was expected to take the keys to the bank, when a *Christian* officer would be in attendance; for this service, I always received some token, usually in the shape of Passover bread and bonbons resembling ears, in memory of those cropped from Haman, when hung for his intended cruelty to Mordecai. It was in the same bank where, for five consecutive years, I assisted the teller in counting Spanish milled dollars for shipment in the Indiaman, Mount Hope, whose voyages were made to the Isle of St. Denis, Bourbon, for coffee; which article cost from eight to ten cents per pound, and was sold in Newport at twenty-eight to thirty-two cents. Brown & Ives, of Providence, were large purchasers.

Besides the Jews already named, there were several other eminent men of that fraternity. Among them, I well remember a Mr. Levara. During their residence in Newport, there was occasional worship in the synagogue. Gradually these impressive services subsided, and finally died out; and then the building was left to the bats and moles, and to the occasional invasion,



through its porches and windows, of boys, who took great pleasure in examining the furniture scattered about. I had often been apprised of a suspended lamp over the altar, the light of which had never been extinguished. This legend excited my curiosity; and one day, upon going into the lofty gallery, I espied it, and expected to see the flame which had been first kindled at Jerusalem issuing from its socket, but my childish hope was destined to be foiled. It was not until the death of the Touros, long after I had left Newport, that their valuable gifts, appropriated for the repair of the synagogue, of the street in front of it, and of the cemetery, effected an entire change in the external aspects of those ancient sacred relics. I never go to Newport without treading those courts where my old friends worshipped, and visiting the burial-place where they are entombed. The Hayes and Myers families are there: the former, eminent Jews of Boston; and the latter, of Virginia,—all of them very dear friends of mine.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## BOOKS.

"Solomon saith truly, 'Of making many books, there is no end;' so insatiable is the thirst of men therein, as also endless is the desire of many in buying and reading them. Proportion an hour's meditation to an hour's reading of a staple author. This makes a man master of his learning. Books that stand thin on the shelves, yet so as the owner of them can bring forth every one of them into use, are better than far greater libraries." — FULLER'S *Holy State*.

I CANNOT help contrasting the paucity of readable books in Newport in 1795, with the almost infinite supply at the present date.

The Redwood Library, now so plenteously endowed with every variety of elementary, entertaining, intellectual, and profound literature, had no attractions to the people generally seventy years ago. What books there were remained after the American Revolution served only to interest a few seedy-looking students, who were seen, occasionally, wending their solitary way to academic *shades*. I recollect looking now and then into that sepulchre of folios and quartos (the octavos, and volumes of less dimeu-

sions, were mostly carried off by the English), shrouded with dust. It was only a brief look, however. But now what a change from the dark, antique, dry, mystical past, to the bright, beautiful, and appealing present, when every order of mind may obtain food, easy or hard of digestion, according to its taste !

Many times I have found myself musing over the comparative scantiness of educational and literary means for mental culture when I was young; greatly wondering that so many men and women should have been so well instructed in the then existing schools. And this wonder was more strongly excited, when I remembered that the prominent tendency was to indulge the imagination, rather than instruct the reason. "Novel-reading," and that not uniformly of the purest type, constituted the mental enjoyment, not merely of the young and pleasure-seeking, but quite a number of old ladies, whose reading and knitting kept perfect time.

Mr. Richardson, the postmaster, and Mr. Wilder, an extensive bookseller and stationer, were the only dealers in novels and heart-rending romances, — such, for instance, as *Evelina*, *Ce-*

celia, and Camilla, by Miss Burney; Sir Charles Grandison, Pamela, and Clarissa, by Richardson; Tom Jones, Jonathan Wild, Joseph Andrews, and The Miser, by Fielding; Roderick Random, Sir Launcelot Greaves, and Peregrine Pickle, by Smollett; Three Spaniards, Fatal Revenge, &c., &c.; Gil Blas, by Le Sage; Robinson Crusoe, by De Foe; The Arabian Nights' Entertainments, Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, &c., &c. These constituted the light literature at that early time. The favorite female authors were Hannah More, Mrs. Barbauld, Miss Edgeworth, Miss Burney, Mrs. Steele, Mrs. Opie, and Mrs. Inchbald. The poets most read were Shakspeare, Milton, Spenser, Dryden, Goldsmith, Cowper, Pope, and Thomson; of historians, Hume, Gibbon, and Robertson; of essayists, Johnson, Addison, Steele, and McKenzie; of satirists, Swift, Cobbett, Barlow, &c., &c.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## DISTINGUISHED MEN.

“Hundreds of names might be cited of men who have early determined to have some one distinct plan of life. From early manhood, they steadily pursued a settled object, and thus brought out their powers, and rose to distinction. Indeed, it would be hard to find a man really worthy of eminence, who had not earnestly directed his attention to one business or profession.”

HON. WILLIAM ELLERY. — I had such frequent intercourse with my venerated grandfather, and received from him so many lessons of wisdom, so many valuable hints, so much good advice, and such positive delight, that I should be false to my happiest recollections, were I to withhold them in this connection. I need say nothing of Mr. Ellery's public services. Are they not written in the archives of the nation? Is not his name conspicuous amongst the signers of the Declaration of Independence? Let me, then, very briefly narrate a few simple incidents indelibly stamped upon my memory during the period of adolescence. Mr. Ellery was a well-read lawyer; and,

upon his appointment to the collectorship of Newport by Washington, he proved himself in every respect equal to so responsible an office, which was renewed during the Presidency of the first Adams, of Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, until his death, Feb. 15, 1820, at the age of ninety-two. His character commanded uniform respect. He required promptitude of those having business with him. Sometimes he felt annoyed at the careless posture and manner with which the customary oath was treated. Once when I was at the Custom House on the "Parade," a burly "skipper" came in, and expressed his wish to make an entry; and, whilst it was being prepared by the deputy, he lolled about and against the office desk, until the oath was ready to be administered to him; then the collector required him to take an erect posture in the centre of the room, and to hold up his right hand, whilst, in a clear voice, the solemn averment was made. I recollect witnessing, some years after this experience, a very different mode of procedure at the Custom House in Boston, when a distinguished importer of French goods made an entry, and the usual words,

“ You solemnly swear,” were hurried over by the collector, who, in the same breath, said, “ Mr. T., you have made an error of nine shillings : just correct it.” Whilst Mr. Ellery was so precise, and sometimes uncomfortably exacting, in the performance of official duties, he was one of the most easy and agreeable of men at home, especially when surrounded by young people, and when recounting scenes connected with college life. I shall never forget the account he once gave to us boys of the robbery committed by sundry students, his classmates, in the hen-house of the parish minister whose services upon the sabbath they were compelled to attend. The reverend pastor’s sleeping-room was known to be in a remote quarter of the house ; but, being Saturday night, he happened to be up late in his study, and, when the purloining began, he was so concealed as to be able to listen without being discovered, and thus became acquainted with the names of the aggressors. In the morning, the “ reverend father ” sent an invitation to them, three in number, to dine with him, which invitation could not be refused. As the guests of the pastor, they were expected

to sit in the minister's pew in the afternoon. The pastor, when he came to the text, quoted from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, "Let them that stole, steal no more." After the usual style of sermonizing at that day, he added, by way of *application* (which was considered, in that simple, unadorned, but practical age, the gist of the discourse), "Methinks I see in yonder pew three *hopeful* youths, who last night robbed my hen-roost; I say unto them, Steal no more!" There was a wag in the same class, who, when occasion offered, took great delight in quoting Scripture. When he and others were out nutting in forbidden ground, and this lover of profane wit was in the tree, shaking the branches, a rustling noise reached their ears, which they construed to be human footsteps, when those below fled in an opposite direction. The youth in the tree, having on a loose gown, was detained by the branches which entangled him, until the cause of the disturbance was discovered, which proved to be a hog rooting amongst the leaves: he then wittily took his revenge upon his cowardly associates by bellowing out an apt quotation from Scripture; viz., "The wicked flee, when



*no man* pursueth; but the *righteous* are *bold* as a lion." Once more, this same wag and his associates, having need of some kindling wood, surreptitiously removed a "sign" from a neighboring inn at a late hour, and split it up; but the theft being unexpectedly discovered, and suspicion fastening upon them, an attack upon their club room was instantly agreed upon. The attack was foiled by sounds which arrested the injured party at the foot of the stairs, indicating religious worship; and especially were they awed by a text from Matthew,—"An evil and adulterous generation seeketh for a sign, and there shall no sign be given it."

Occasionally my grandfather related incidents connected with his horseback journeys as a member of the Continental Congress held at York and Philadelphia. He took with him as a companion, in one instance, my father, and, in another, Judge Dana, of Cambridge. These journeys were often prosecuted under severe obstacles, and with many personal dangers. The necessary clothing was carried in saddle-bags, which were made of thick russet leather, and well lined, to prevent the articles inclosed from

being chafed. When ready, the two gentlemen crossed the West Passage to Narragansett, and took their departure from Cranston. I have not space to write out ten of the hundred or more adventures, serious and ludicrous, which varied the transit, occupying nearly a month, from Rhode Island to Pennsylvania. Late in life, I was favored with the perusal of my grandfather's diary, which revived in my memory the thrilling stories which excited so great an interest in the hearing when I was merely a boy. .

One more of these stories included the following peculiarity of an Old Cambridge divine. Whenever, at the close of public religious services, rain happened to be falling, the good minister, thinking his flock could never hear too much of a very good thing, would not hastily dismiss them, but let fall remarks and anecdotes suited to the time and place; looking, however, very wistfully out of the window, if haply he might find a pause in the drops, and, in such case, cry out, "Let us embrace this *slatch*; glory be," &c.; and then be the first to escape.

The facts under this and previous headings are detailed in their order. Although trusting

wholly to memory, I believe nothing essential to a good understanding of the "times" embraced in these "Recollections" has been omitted, or in any wise exaggerated. Every thing has come up naturally, yielding me, perhaps, much greater pleasure than will be obtained by my readers.

I might give quite a popular registry of sayings and doings which were repeated to me from time to time in reference to my beloved and honored grandparent; but, as the sole intent of this little volume is to give merely *my own* recollections of men and things, I must refrain from what would otherwise be a highly pleasurable undertaking.

I cannot close this tribute to a learned and good man, without alluding to some domestic relationships which rendered his long life a blessing to the young and old with whom he was connected. Mr. Ellery was eminently deserving of the title of scholar. His knowledge of the works of the best authors in Latin and Greek was extensive. His taste for the classics was developed at an early age, and continued to almost the last day of his earthly sojourn. Hor-

ace was his favorite satirist among the poets. He was not, however, so wedded to ancient classics, as to be forgetful of the claims of a host of English philosophers, critics, historians, men of science, poets, &c., to his study and admiration. His small Bible, full of marginal notes, held a prominent place upon his study table, and was read reverently by him daily. He was conscientiously disposed to concede the largest liberty in matters of faith; and he was no dogmatist in the maintenance of views peculiar to his early religious culture. His extreme old age was not so much the product of a robust constitution, as of great regularity and simplicity of living. He avoided medication as far as possible. He very seldom found it necessary to consult a physician. He was hospitable, and provided an excellent table; indulged himself and his guests with two minute glasses of old sherry wine: the toasts being, "All our friends;" "All our enemies." He preserved the custom introduced by Rev. Ezra Stiles; viz., of eating pudding before meat. He would say jocosely to us boys, "Now, the boy who eats the most pudding shall have the most meat."

But he could not often beguile us in this way; and hence we invariably eat sparingly of the first, especially whenever the last belonged to the poultry genus. Even late in life, my grandfather seldom allowed himself the luxury of a fire in his sleeping-room. His habit was to confine himself pretty closely to the house between October and May. He carried on his correspondence with the Government with an ordinary quill, taken from a native bird, and used the common "foolscap" paper, manufactured at the Brandywine mills in Delaware, having rough edges and a peculiar brownish hue. His handwriting was stiff, but remarkably legible. The quarterly accounts which he rendered were very accurate; so much so, that I believe they were never returned by the comptroller of the treasury but once, and then only involving the difference of one cent, during his long collectorship. His excessive scrupulousness was thought to be his only fault. During the noted embargo era, — a measure which he at heart repudiated, — he never deviated a hair's breadth in the execution of the law. Neither friends nor foes had power to warp his judgment, or abate the

exactness which his sense of official duty demanded.

MR. SAMUEL ELAM.—I have pleasant recollections of Mr. Elam, and of his weekly visit to the town in an English phaeton, very lofty, and of yellow color, to attend the directors' meeting of the Rhode-Island Union Bank, of which he was president, I believe, from its incorporation until his death, Oct. 24, 1813. His dress was that of the "old English gentleman," of the Quaker type. He never wore any other than a drab-colored coat and small clothes, and white satin vest. He gave princely entertainments at his country seat, which he named Vauclose,\* situated off the East Road, on the island, about five or six miles from Newport. His library, from its superior excellence, attracted much notice. No one was ever more ready to benefit a poor student, by loan of his best books, than Mr. Elam; but he exacted their punctual return, and that they should be entirely free from blem-

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\* The name of a village and remarkable fountain in France. Its scenery is most picturesque; but it derives its chief celebrity from having been the residence of Petrarch.

ish. He was fond of having young persons at his hospitable board, whom he relieved from all needless constraint, by a most cheerful and encouraging manner. His tumblers and wine-glasses were highly ornamented, and bore his initials. Mr. Elam was often at our counting-house, in consultation with my employers respecting matters connected with the foundation and superstructure of a stone bridge at Tiverton. I kept the record of the *corde*s of stone dropped into the abyss; for so it seemed fit to be called at that day. Previous to this undertaking, several wooden structures had been swept away by driving storms through the "East Passage." This last attempt, therefore, to connect the island with the mainland, proved to be a gigantic affair; and but few persons in Newport believed that it could ever be accomplished. It took years of labor to bring to the surface the angular point upon which was to rest the future road-bed of the causeway and draw. No one deserved, or more justly received, credit for the inception, engineering, and completion of the work, than Mr. Elam. It was a great day of rejoicing, — the day of its opening; and no one

was happier than he who laid its corner-stone, and was permitted to witness the crossing and recrossing of the throng of men and women on the day of its completion.

GILBERT STUART. — It has been a matter of dispute whether this eminent portrait-painter was born in one of the western counties of Rhode Island or in Newport. I knew Mr. Stuart for a number of years in Boston; and we frequently talked about our birth-place. He used to speak of Newport as his earliest home, and of circumstances and events which left no doubt in my mind that it was his native place. He never alluded to any other locality in the Narragansett region, as having been the place of his birth.

Mr. Stuart was an admirable talker; but, what was more rare, he was a good listener. He took boundless pleasure in relating anecdotes connected with his early life and professional labors. He told me one day, that while painting the portrait of a gentleman for many years a resident of Newport, whose face wore an expression of unvarying gravity, it occurred to him that the



sitter was related to one of his old schoolmates; and, wishing to provoke a smile upon his imperturbable face, he ventured to ask him if he had ever heard of one of the juvenile pranks of an uncle of his. The answer was in the negative, his features relaxing a little at the thought that his venerable and remarkably sedate relative could ever have indulged in a mischievous act; but the narration of the incident so excited the risibles of his sitter, that it became difficult to tranquillize his features to the softened expression which the artist aimed to transfer to the canvas, and which finally relieved it from the stiff and sombre air which had gathered over it. As often as I gaze upon the painting, I feel convinced of the accuracy of Mr. Stuart's statement. The smile is exquisitely tempered.

Stuart's success in male portraits was unsurpassed by any American artist for truthfulness and color. That of the senior Mr. Gibbs, often exhibited in the gallery at the Boston Athæneum, will never be forgotten. Mr. Stuart's female portraits were less interesting to me. Perhaps it was only a fancy of mine; but he seemed to have wearied of painting the varied feminine

dress of the period, covered with lace, and the garniture of the head, rich in ornaments.

I was once excessively amused with Mr. Stuart's description of a visit to Newport, at a late period of his eventful life. He recounted to me the incidents at his house in Boston. It was upon one of his brightest days, his easel prepared, and a huge pinch of snuff held in suspense, that I replied to his first question,—“When were you last at the island?” I named the time, which proved to be as long as that between *his* earliest departure and latest return. “Oh!” he said, in reply, “you have done wisely in refraining from breaking the spell with which long absence is sure to invest any particular spot. Now, I had not been in Newport, for many, many years, when I made up my mind to go on a pilgrimage in hope of meeting some old familiar faces. I felt, before starting, that the changes I should witness would cause sadness; but my mind was made up, and so southward I bent my steps.”

It was something of a journey then to Newport,—through Walpole to Providence the first night, and by the packet down the river the next

day. "I landed somewhere near Ferry-wharf Lane, and was directed to respectable lodgings in Broad Street, quite near to the State House. Next morning, I began my search for old landmarks and frosty heads. The former were scarce enough. I could hardly recognize localities once familiar. The dust and grime of many years covered spots which were fresh and fair in my boyish days. I strayed to the upper part of the town, gave a look at the graveyard and at headstones with most quaint inscriptions, made my bow to the Liberty Tree, and walked at my leisure down Thames Street. It would have been better named 'Long Lane;' for owing to its narrowness, its want of sidewalks, and its centre flat-stone gutter, "lane" would have sounded less pompous, and been more truthful. I passed along, looking eagerly at the signs, that I might read the names of old friends. People stared at me, and I at them; but we could not identify one another. Beginning to feel rather 'blue' over the 'wrecks of time,' I thought I might while away a portion of my visit in the organ-loft of 'Old Trinity,' and perchance, by force of memory and a vivid imagination, revive

some of the sweet music that used to reach me in my humble pew from one of the best instruments then in America, the gift of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne. I then visited the stone mill, and mentally renewed my questionings respecting that strange and meaningless structure; cast a glance at the Redwood Library building, admired its unique architecture, so classical, so refined; examined a few folios, and reverently gazed at their pictorial embellishments. From thence I roamed in the neighborhood of 'Brinley's' ropewalks; visited the beach where I had so often bathed; and after exploring the inner and outer and above and below passages of that once, in my view, gigantic building, the State House, I returned to my lodgings, to muse over the scenes of my childhood and riper years. In the afternoon, having nothing better to do, I made a second visit to the church, examined the ancient tablets in memory of Marmaduke Browne and others, and finally exhausted the daylight in reading familiar names on the monuments in the yard."

Mr. Stuart was born in 1755, and died in 1828.

CHARLES KING. — I have already alluded to my early intimacy with this deservedly esteemed son of Newport. He was, as a boy, faultless in temper and disposition. He evinced respect for the aged by graceful salutations; and to those of his own years he was endeared by joyousness and unselfishness. Very early in life, his love of art became apparent. He followed his bent at first in simple sketches of familiar objects, his perseverance finally culminating in a well-earned distinction. In 1857 we met. Having just bathed, he was returning from the beach, where we both in former years disported; at one time breasting the curling breakers, and, at another, yielding to their embrace, which bore us high and dry to the shore. Fifty years had elapsed, and yet the same genial smile and the same sweet tone greeted me as of yore. His love of Newport never intermitted; and during his professional life, and at his decease, he left many valuable remembrances to the place where he was nurtured, and to the Redwood Library, whose interests were ever precious to him.

MALBONE. MALBONE'S GARDEN.—The name, as above, was endeared to me by a long acquaintance with him who was always addressed by the title of Captain. I mean the Hon. Francis Malbone, who commanded the oldest military corps in the State, and which still holds the first rank for discipline and soldierly bearing. Who will ever forget the noble stature, the generous spirit, and the contagious merriment, of this excellent man? He had a relative, Mr. Godfrey Malbone, whose history and habitation became quite interesting to me in my juvenile and maturer years. Amongst my earliest rambles, not one comes home to my recollection so fresh and fair as that which had its terminus at Miantonomi Hill. The block-house, so called, with its Indian legends, and the relics of rural cultivation in and around "Malbone's Garden," were to me full of attractions. The well-defined paths, with their borders of boxwood, preserved so many years in that splendid enclosure, after its proprietor, dismayed by the destruction by fire of his dwelling, had forsaken it for a home in a neighboring colony (Connecticut), were so beautiful in my eye, as to leave impressions almost as

vivid to-day as in my youthful peregrinations, sixty-five years ago.

At the time, or about the time, of the Revolution, Colonel Malbone, who had the reputation of being a Tory (rather an opprobrious epithet then, when British bayonets threatened compulsion to British rule), marking the rapidly growing determination of his fellow-citizens to become independent of the Crown, decided to vacate his patrimonial estates, and to retire to what was then considered a wilderness; namely, Pomfret, Conn., afterwards named Brooklyn. He purchased a large number of acres on the Quinebaug River. He built himself a house, and furnished it with every luxury. Being a strict Episcopalian, at least in name, he built a manse for his curate, with a glebe attached. He owned a great number of slaves; and, although profane swearing was considered allowable in the master, it was otherwise with the slave.

In selecting his future home, Colonel Malbone showed a genuine perception of the beautiful. Whatever may have been his habits of thought and life, Colonel Malbone evinced a memorable outward respect for the Christian institutions in

which he was brought up; and one of his first acts after his removal was the erection of an Episcopal church. He selected a lovely spot, and the chapel exhibited the truest and rarest architectural proportions. To this day, it is carefully preserved, and with its surroundings of superb trees, and other rich rural adornments, constitutes a beautiful feature in that section of country.

In near neighborhood to the church is a cemetery where repose a number of Colonel Malbone's near relatives, viz. the Brinleys and Foggs. During a residence of four years in Brooklyn, I frequently visited the locality, and the mansion once occupied by Colonel Malbone. His establishment reminded one of the descriptions given of those belonging, *par excellence*, to the "old English gentleman."

When I was in Brooklyn, I frequently met in the road a colored man, a descendant of one of Godfrey Malbone's slaves, who bore the name of Frank Malbone.

OLIVER H. PERRY.—In youth, and in riper years, he was noted for personal beauty and pre-



cocious manliness. He was one of the handsomest boys in town. His beauty was after the similitude of David, when Jesse presented him to the great prophet of Israel; viz., "Now, he was ruddy, and, withal, of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to." His deportment in early manhood was indicative of that firmness and resolution which, in later years, forced the flag of England to strike to the "Stars and Stripes."

The admirable picture exhibited in Boston, representing Commodore Perry's victory on Lake Erie, especially pleased me by its accurate likeness of the young naval hero.

I should like to indulge in a free and full expression of my admiration of this son of Rhode Island, as I became aware of his powers in mature life; but, as these "Recollections" are designed mainly to preserve the incidents of childhood and youth, I am reluctantly compelled to withhold a more ample tribute to what he accomplished in behalf of the country. I may, however, memorize a few facts in connection with Commodore Perry's early experiences.

He entered the navy in the spring of 1799,

when he was only fifteen years of age, as midshipman, now styled "naval cadet," and made his first voyage in the frigate General Greene, under the command of his father, Captain Christopher Perry. He afterwards served in the John Adams, in the frigate Constellation, and in the schooner Revenge, which latter vessel was wrecked upon Watch-hill, Conn., Jan., 1811.

Commodore Perry was born in Newport, R.I., . . . . in August, 1785; died in Port Spain, Island of Trinidad, Aug. 23, 1819. His remains were removed to Newport. A lofty monument in the town cemetery bears record of a people's gratitude and love.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## OLD ACQUAINTANCES.

“Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And never brought to mind?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And days of o’ lang syne?”

**B**ENJAMIN HADWIN.—A man exceedingly fond of old costly books. He interested me mainly by his persistent efforts in hunting up valuable books stolen from the Redwood Library, and which were known to have been scattered, during the Revolutionary war, in several of the country towns, especially in Narragansett, Bristol, and Warren, and not a few even in Newport. I never saw a man more elated than was friend Hadwin, when he showed a folio volume, devoted to illustrations of English Heraldry. He hooked it, he said, from one of the best libraries in Newport. Nearly all of the folio volumes, the gifts of Abraham Redwood, were restored to the shelves of that unique library by Mr. Hadwin. I always felt that he deserved

a niche amongst the contributors to probably the most ancient institution of the kind in the country.

STEPHEN GOULD. — A most excellent man, and highly respected, a member of the "Friends" community. His main business was watch cleaning and repairing. I delighted in visiting him, that I might observe the removal of the parts which held the watch-work together, and the adjustment of the hairspring and verge. Mr. Gould's disposition was so bland, and his conversation so agreeable, that I hardly passed a day without "dropping in." He had a good mind and a warm heart. Holding military tactics as antichristian, and military fines as unwarrantable exactions, he adopted the non-resistant tenet held by the "Friends;" and, when visited by the clerk of a company with a bill for non-attendance at roll-call, he, Mr. Gould, would open a drawer, and go on with his work, leaving the officer to take as much money as he pleased. I once offered to settle the bill for him; but he refused, as it would seem to the collector of the fines, that he tacitly

consented to the justice of such claims. He never looked at the bill, nor even examined his money-drawer, in order to ascertain how much he had involuntarily parted with

Mr. Gould was devotedly attached to the study of natural history.

DAVID BUFFUM, SEN.—He was an approved and gifted minister amongst “Friends.” He was as conscientious in fulfilling his farming trusts, as in preaching the word. He was a guileless man, and of uncommon intellectual power. I went frequently to hear him at the fifth-day (Thursday) meetings, especially when a wedding was to come off. There was something in the manner of intoning the prayers and preaching at “Quaker meeting,” which was very attractive. The voice used in that way had a marvellous effect in enchaining the attention of the auditor.

CLARKE RODMAN, also a “Friend,” and already spoken of in these “Recollections,” was a trustworthy servant of the town in the town clerk’s department. He had a large family, all of

whom bore scriptural names. His youngest son, Caleb, was a particular friend of mine. Mr. Rodman was quite *clever*, in the English use of that term : —

“ A man severe he was, and stern to view;  
I knew him well, and every truant knew;  
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace  
The day's disasters in his morning face.”

I sometimes thought he would have been more lenient, had his smoking propensities been less enslaving. I used to see him more than once every day, but never without his long and curved pipe. Late in life, he became an approved minister of the weekly, quarterly, and yearly meetings. He always welcomed me to his house.

NANCY CARPENTER. — Properly *Anna*, after the prophetess. Attached to the same faith was this admirable woman, with whom I boarded for a number of years whilst serving out my mercantile apprenticeship. If, at any time, I was boisterously gay, she would give me one of her ineffable smiles, and, by a gentle pat on the head, indicate her willingness to forgive me, if I would check my mirth. Sometimes she would say,

“George, I shall be obliged to send to thy uncle, unless thou art willing to lessen thy noise.” But she never did send; for she was the personification of good nature.

At her house, opposite Captain Eng’s store, in Thames Street, I first became acquainted with the method of “Friends’ religious meetings” at private houses. We young folks were sometimes in Mrs. Carpenter’s sitting-room, perhaps just after tea, when a few sisters, accompanied by an elder, would happen in. Almost immediately, conversation would subside, and *we* were in a “Quaker meeting.” The silence continued half an hour, and then the grasping of hands signified that the meeting was over. Gossiping had no countenance amongst this grave people.

SALLY DENNIS. — Another Quakeress, who kept what was termed in her day a huckster’s or fruit shop. She confined herself simply to retailing sweets, — viz., candy, figs, nuts, &c.; and she always kept the very best. “Her face was as smiling as a basket of chips on a frosty morning.” Although somewhat advanced in life when I first knew her, her complexion was free

from wrinkles, and soft as the skin of a child. I never saw a wrinkled Quakeress in my life; they are too sweet-tempered to allow of the deformity. The boys, and sometimes the girls, made her shop a sort of juvenile exchange.



## CHAPTER XX.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

**PUBLIC RELIGIOUS MEETINGS OF "FRIENDS."**

— The most noted assembly was held at the spring "yearly meeting." During my boyhood, no season was more earnestly looked for, by old and young, than this convention; embracing all New England, and delegates from other similar associations, at home and abroad. According to tradition, rain was always expected about this time: I will not vouch for the fulfillment of the prediction, nor for a similar anticipation when the basket-vendor made his appearance. I was never able to trace back, in any of the Rhode-Island legends, why Quaker gatherings and basket-vending had any thing to do with the falling of rain; but my ears could not have deceived me, when at the appearance of the neat slate or drab colored bonnet, and at the cry of "Baskets," I heard "Look out for

rain." So much for an episode which may have tired the reader; and yet I may appeal to a sober fact, that very many pleasant books, not mine however, are made up of inconsequential fancies. I deal in facts, and not in fancies, and will go on with my account of "Friends' meetings."

The meeting began on First day, Sunday, at Portsmouth, on the island, and at the adjournment, to assemble for business on Second day, Monday, at Newport, and continued from day to day, until the close of the following First-day (Sunday) afternoon. During the previous week, the town was filled with "Friends," clothed in their peculiar garb, exquisitely neat, and of the subdued colors which contrasted so strikingly with the showy dress of the world's people. It was pleasant, however, to see the readiness with which every house was thrown open for the hospitable entertainment of "Friends," strangers sometimes, drawn together from all quarters, and even from distant continents, for communion and sympathy. Nothing excited my notice so much as the caps worn by the staid women and lovely girls. I had often heard of *sheer* muslin: but,

when seen in stomachers and caps faultless in whiteness and polish, the impression of the beauty and the fitness of that material, as worn by the guests in my mother's family, has never been effaced from my memory.

At the final Sunday-afternoon meeting, which was held at a later hour than usual for the accommodation of outsiders from other churches, the gathering was immense. At one of these anniversaries, the public were permitted to hear addresses from two young women, one of them recently from England, both very handsome and wonderfully eloquent. The English devotee, Ann Alexander, held the throng in breathless attention. The silence during her address was so profound as to be "felt;" and, when disturbed for a moment by the emphatic elevation of the speaker's voice, it only became intensified from fear of losing an after-word.

MARRIAGES. — If there was an entertainment, I particularly relished in my boyish days, it was a Quaker wedding, — so free from parade, and so eminently truthful and binding. With the world's people, a priest or magistrate is expected

to officiate ; but, with " Friends," the part themselves do the publishing and the marryi. At a public weekly meeting, they declare th intentions ; and at a similar gathering, the we or fortnight following, just before the elders the high seats prepare to close their silent or o worship, they stand up, and, taking each other the right hand, the man says,\* " In the presen of God and these witnesses, I, —, take A. whom I hold by my right hand, to be my w promising, by divine assistance, to be unto a faithful and affectionate husband ; and, fors ing all others, I promise to cleave unto her, a to her alone, until God, by death, shall separ us." The woman, after the same manner, mer changing the pronouns, covenants fidelity a affection to the man whom she has chosen her husband, so long as life lasts ; and th they seal their vows, by repeating the gospel junction, " Whom God hath joined together, not man put asunder." After the solemnizati of the rite followed the signing of the marria certificate ; first by the husband and wife, th

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\* The words I use may not be literally exact.

by the near relatives, and such other persons as felt inclined. "The boys" were always glad to sign the connubial record.

"Friends," in my day, had *their* peculiarities. They were clannish, of few words, and only such as would bear repeating; unobservant of other people's defects, and strict in criticising their own; proverbially neat; never in debt,—hence never sued; pure in speech—"yea, yea, and nay, nay;" temperate in eating and drinking; anti-slavery in word and act; free from parade at funerals; affectionate at leave-taking,—FAREWELL signifying their faith, hope, and love.

CUSTOMS.—Every community is noted for idiosyncrasies, usages, customs, which constitute no mean items in the construction of its history. *First*, Foot-stoves were in constant requisition, when I was a boy, by women, at home and at church. Parlor fires were not kindled until a certain period designated in R. B. Thomas's Almanac had arrived. When the equinoctial gale came unseasonably, the keeping-room, as it was called, was deserted, and the kitchen fireplace became the resort of both old and young.

A piece of furniture called a settle, with its high back and of semicircular shape, was a highly esteemed seat at such times; and, when the coals were glowing of an early autumnal evening, the old sepulchral chimney, with its cosey corners, was hailed as a godsend. *Second*, Twice a year, a noted cheap shoemaker, from Bristol, visited Newport, to obtain the length of the feet of every boy and girl: the width, and fulness or slinness of the instep, were never considered. Two or three pairs of shoes had to answer for the year. Boots were a great luxury; they were of the "Suwaroff" pattern, of a length but a little below the knee, sometimes surmounted by a yellow or buff-colored top, or black silk tassel. India-rubber shoes and boots were unknown. The toes of boots and shoes were sharp-pointed, and the heels very high.

Boys wore deep ruffled shirts, the ruffles falling half way down the back. Young men wore "small clothes" and knee-lacings. Ladies wore high-top combs, and hair in huge puffs on each side of the head. Shoulder-straps were common; but the elastic suspender was reserved for modern times. Small, double-case

silver watches, of the most ordinary make, there were; and now and then, as at the present day in an old-fashioned family, might be found one of those nondescript time-keepers which were generally within half an hour of the true time. Gold watches for show were displayed on great occasions. Warming-pans were used in cases of sickness, and by stealth at other times, when the thermometer ranged in the neighborhood of zero. Muffs of fur were rare indeed. Some of black silk, quilted with cotton wool, might frequently be seen. Socks and stockings were of domestic growth. Boys might be seen with *bare feet* in summer, excepting Sundays, when the best gear was aired. Stiff, plaited ruffs, of the "Elizabethan" age, were often deemed ornamental on the necks of the fair. *Trousers*, and not pantaloons, was the name given to that portion of male dress covering the lower limbs. There were no separate shirt-collars, neck-ties, or "dickies," worn sixty years ago. The collar of the shirt, when starched, stood up nearly to the ears, and was inclosed by what was called either a cravat or stock or neckcloth or "pudding." Young men wore ruffled shirt-bosoms.

The boys' inner garment was surmounted by a very wide collar and ruffle. Bosom-pins, of various patterns, were common. I had presented to me, by a cousin, a pair with cornelian heads, united by a gold chain, which I still own. It obtained for me, at that juvenile period, some notice. Oh, the simplicity of that age, when a thin gold ear-hoop and a string of gold beads constituted the beginning and the end of female finery! There were no professional dentists then; but there were in most mouths splendid teeth, and hence I infer that the modern recourse to their aid must be owing to the increased luxury of living.

It was not thought necessary to have the streets of Newport furnished with sidewalks. The custom prevailed of walking in them midway. Thames Street was rendered very disagreeable, by permission given to owners of wharves to place, at their several openings, POSTS, in order, as it was averred, to prevent houses and stores so situated from being injured by the passage of carts and trucks by them. For many, many years, this liberty assumed the semblance of a right; and it was not



until very many persons were injured on dark nights, by falling against these obstructions, that measures were proposed for their removal. By and by, a scheme was suggested by a young man, a schoolfellow of mine, for ridding the town of the *nuisance*. It was carried out in the manner following; viz.: On one blustering dark night, when windows and window-blinds were shaking, and when every light in the stores and houses was extinguished, a youthful band of reformers, with saws in hand, proceeded to cut down these offenders. The work went bravely on until the day dawned, when only one of the posts remained. Our leader, a notorious wag, thinking it best to perpetrate a joke, took from his pocket a lump of chalk, and wrote on the lone *upright* intruder the words —

“POST-PONED.”

It was suspected, but never discovered, to whom, mainly, the public were indebted for this *cutting* rebuke; but the ghastly object was quickly removed, and in due time sidewalks were introduced. Of sunshades and parasols there were none. Silk umbrellas had not been thought of. Oiled linen ones, stiff, unwieldy,

capable of standing alone, were the only ones to be seen on the street. High-top combs, horn and shell, were in vogue. Hoops, whether of steel or cane, were not to be found. A lady in the street to-day, with the wind boxing (a sailor phrase) from north-east to south-west, and from south-east to north-west, — quite a gale, — minus the stiffened crinoline, would present an accurate duplicate of the style of street costume in England, France, and this country, sixty years ago, as given in Akerman's Repository, the accredited London standard of fashion at that day, still extant in some old families. These pictorial sketches of ladies' tight-fitting costumes excited as much admiration in the beholders of that day, as is now awakened by the waste of silks, and accompanying "waterfalls," "rats," "mice," *et cætera*.

It was the custom for watchmen to cry the wind and weather; and, when the nights were stormy and cold, many of them received a mug of ginger-and-cider flip. When a death occurred, it was usual to engage persons to watch the body from an adjacent room: this was done to guard against the possible intrusion of rats and

mice, then a common tenantry. At funerals, it was customary to place gloves upon the coffin, as gifts to the pall-bearers. The usage is still sometimes observed.

There were no door-bells in my day; huge brass knockers indicated the mode for obtaining admission into dwellings. Many of the ancient houses in Newport still retain this bright embellishment.

Town meetings were summoned by a town officer, who was always accompanied by the town drummer. A town crier was appointed by the town, and the office has been sustained up to the present time. It was the custom at the close of the old, and opening of the new year, to ring the church-bells.

FURNITURE. — Cowper, in his poem of the "Sofa," gives happy illustrations of the progress made in the manufacture of comfortable seats. But it was long after the poet's day before such a luxury as a sofa was allowed in Newport, as a general thing. Puritan simplicity never got beyond the construction of a settee, generally made of cane; rocking chairs were of still later

date. The antique high-backed chair was the glory of the old homestead, which modern love of imitation has aimed to renew in fashionable circles, or spent itself in the purchase, at any price, of the original. But what shall I say of the peculiar "high chair," in which babies, held on the nurses' shoulders, were soothed to sleep? It was not being "rocked in the cradle of the deep," I can assure my readers; and, when to those vibratory motions (by which the nurse tried to supply the place of rockers to the chair) were added impulsive claps upon the poor little one's unresisting back, you may, without the force of a vivid imagination, reckon up the many severe squalls in those kitchens and bedrooms (for there were no nurseries then, nor sweet-tempered nursery girls, so *common* (?) now-a-days) from the tiny throats of those little sufferers. One of my recollections in this connection I must give at any cost. Having witnessed many specimens of this branch of baby management, I once tried my skill at it. I was on board a large pleasure packet, with a great number of passengers, amongst whom was a lady, with a nice-looking baby, but not a nice-

acting one. Such crying I had never heard since I left my *quiet* home. The mother went into the cabin, and, after sundry shakes, tossings, and endearments, returned to the deck in a hopeless condition. Recollecting the labors of my time in behalf of "brats" (as that polished age was in the habit of calling "aside" sweet, long-robed, squalling infants), I ventured, young as I was, to ask the loan of this precious one; which was promptly granted. The job I had undertaken attracted quite a crowd around me; and, very soon after occupying the seat of honor (one of the veritable high-backed chairs of my infancy and childhood), I commenced the up-and-down struggle, as for very life, at first gently patting the little one's back, and singing one of my *chromatic* tunes; and it began to yield, by a sort of whine. In a little while, I ventured to change its position by placing its breast and limbs across my knees, and then longitudinally passing my hand down its spine, as I had often seen done at home, till finally the little sobbing creature subsided into a heavenly calm. I then quietly removed it to a berth in the cabin, where it slept until we reached the end of our voyage. A vote

of thanks awaited me. I bowed acceptance; and thus ended, for a time at least, my duties as a nurse.

AN EPISODE. — It was a custom in Rhode Island (where beach-sand was cheap), after washing-day was well over, for the cook to dot the kitchen floor, previously washed and holystoned, with little mounds of wet fresh sand; and these hillocks were gracefully arranged to please the eye of “Missis” when summoned to witness the cook’s skill. On one of these occasions, a man, having some question to ask, opened the kitchen door, and thoughtlessly stepped upon one of these miniature mounds, before it had been exhibited, and approved by the mistress of the house; and received for his carelessness a word and a blow, which penalty he never incurred again. The maid, in her department, in those days, claimed equal respect with the mistress.

FURNITURE. — Sideboards of the peculiar kind then used are seldom seen at the present day. The various stimulating beverages were exhibited in Dutch liquor-cases in an open space

below, or in triangular liquor-stands above: these last held bottles and glasses richly gilt, with silver labels suspended, designating the contents of each; and especially do I remember the names of the *liqueurs*, "cherry bounce" and light wines, peculiarly the property of the ladies. It was deemed quite inhospitable to suffer a guest to be long in the sitting-room, without asking him what he would be pleased to take. It was one of the chief tests of hospitality, this proffering of the sparkling glass; and, when the host enjoyed an enviable reputation for having the best wines, he experienced no lack of company. The rich-carved salver or waiter was a prominent feature of the sideboard; and the taper-shaped wine-glasses and bumper tumblers, bearing the owner's name richly engraved, always excited a pleasant glance from boon companions. There were punch-bowls of every size, shape, and finish. Men of the old school were expert in mingling the various articles which constituted genuine punch. The compound consisted of the juice of lemons (not limes), Jamaica rum, St. Croix rum, arrack (a spirituous liquor distilled only in India), and the best of loaf-sugar,

—the whole cooled down in the well. There were no ice-houses nor refrigerators in my day. A boat-shaped ladle was used in dealing out this pleasant liquor, “nectar,” so called. There were a few persons—old sea-captains, traders at ports in the Bay of Biscay, Mediterranean, &c.—who indulged, as they smoked, in drinking “burnt brandy.”

By way of applying the lesson which these sorry habits—formed in an early era of the world’s history, and continued on, on, on, to this boasted age of refinement—emphatically teach, I may be permitted to say, that all the sins we outwardly deplore or inwardly conceal are traceable to boyhood and girlhood. Adult age would be happy and peaceful, were there no “damned spots” to be rubbed out. Experience teaches that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Apply the maxim religiously to childhood and youth, and all would *be* well and remain well. Precept, without example to enforce it, was as valueless then as now.

PARLOR AND DRAWING-ROOM FURNITURE.—This furniture sixty years since, though very simple



and plain, was not then accounted *mean*, as there was no metropolitan standard. House-keepers in New York, Boston, and Newport, furnished their houses in equal style; or, if there was any superiority, it was in favor of "little Rhody." A carpet was the most expensive article, yet it was seldom of a higher grade than a "Kidderminster." Light was not then excluded by window shades and blinds: hence the colors of a carpet quickly faded from fiery red, deep blue, and grass green, to brick color, to pale lilac, and to the salt-water hue.

The plate of a looking-glass was very small, with too wide a frame for beauty. This lack of symmetry was owing to the costliness of plate-glass and the cheapness of wood. The latter was of pine, gilded, or of mahogany veneers. A round mirror (with side-sockets for candles) was deemed a very elegant ornament; and it was very amusing to children, from its glass being so formed as to diminish apparently whatever it reflected.

The most valuable chairs were of mahogany, with straight, varnished backs, consisting of a centre-piece supported by a narrow slab on each

side. The seats, many of them, were of polished leather, stained black. When the seats sloped forward, it required no little skill to sit upright. The bellows and the hearth-brush (the former studded with polished nails, and the latter painted in lines or circles) hung at opposite sides of the fireplace, more for show than use. The sideboard I have already described; and the schedule is complete when is added a small card-table, the circular edges and legs of which were inlaid with diamond-shaped pieces of white ivory. Owing to the lack of machinery, this beggarly account of parlor furniture (as it would now be esteemed), which could be purchased at the present day at from fifty to seventy-five dollars, probably cost then from one hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars.

CHAMBER FURNITURE. — This, of course, was less attractive than that of the story below. The bureau was of dark polished mahogany, frequently ornamented with fanciful carving and swinging brass handles. It was much smaller than that now in use; and the drawers had none of the divisions for jewelry, &c., lined with

velvet, esteemed indispensable by the fashionables of the present day. In the best chamber, the bedstead was surmounted by a cornice, to which was attached calico or dimity curtains, looped for the display of the fringed counterpane. This "best" chamber was used only on great occasions.

When General Washington was in Newport, at the time of the Revolution, he and Count Rochambeau slept under these canopies; and the descendants of the household honored by these distinguished guests preserved this fact in the family record, as one always to be remembered. There was a great deal of family pride in those days; and I was never more amused than when girls ransacked books of heraldry to ascertain the "coat of arms" said to have belonged to their ancestry in the old countries. Whenever these significant proofs of "gentle blood" were ascertained, the fond fathers were persuaded to transfer them to the panels of coaches or chaise-bodies. They were seldom noticed, however, or their purpose understood; and hence jealousy and envy failed of a place in the minds of the humbler classes.

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The ordinary bedstead was unsteady, and creaked with every motion; and its frame was held together by iron bed-screws. Sometimes it was furnished with a "sacking bottom;" but, generally, the bed or under-bed of straw was laid on cords, and the feather bed above: these, generally speaking, were not of the softest texture. I used to hear a great deal about *live*-geese feathers; and I ventured to ask, in my simplicity, if those of the *dead* geese would not be softer. Hair mattresses had not been invented. Our progenitors were unwisely economical in some things, and in beds and bedding especially. I read, in later life, one of Dr. Franklin's experiences, in which he alludes to some of his domestic hardships, particularly in winter. The story, which was very amusing, revived in my mind recollections of similar trials. Often, owing to a scant supply of bed-covering, I had to jump to the floor; and, by swinging my arms backwards and forwards, after the fashion of wood-sawyers, for a few minutes, I got into a glow. Probably I am indebted to my hardy nurture for an unusual amount of physical health and activity, through a long life.

CARRIAGES. — In my early days, the conveniences for travelling in Newport were very limited. Of double teams, there were three coaches, two phaetons, and two public hacks. These, with a few dozen chaises, having leather seats for drivers resting on an iron frame in front, and half a dozen wagons, constituted all the vehicles there were in the town. Of course, every farmer on the island had these conveniences; and strangers had their carriages: hence the principal business streets often wore the appearance of great activity. Occasionally a scrub-race would come off, much to the delight of the urchins. Narragansett was famous for her breed of "pacers," whose motion, although not graceful, was easy, and therefore highly valued by men. I hardly recollect ever seeing a side-saddle. Young ladies' out-door exercise was confined to walking and an occasional drive. Every description of pleasure vehicle was mounted in the air as high as possible, rendering the "getting in and out," especially with spirited horses, quite inconvenient and dangerous. The inconvenience and hazard, however, were readily incurred, rather than the sacrifice of the grand appear-

ance of the vehicle towering through the streets, causing as much wonder among the uninitiated as John Gilpin's journey to and from Islington.

HEALTH. — Perhaps no town in the country has been blessed with a greater degree of health than Newport. In common with all other places, certain well-known diseases — viz., measles, whooping-cough, scarlet and typhus fever — were at times prevalent. During my mercantile probation, there were two seasons of great alarm. The first was the introduction of several cases of yellow fever from Providence. The Spanish consul, Wiseman, died of it. The second trouble was local, and much more distressing. A sudden and most malignant disease appeared in the house of Mr. Nicholas Geffroy, in Thames Street, near the residences of Mr. Walter Channing and Mr. George Champlin. It was supposed to have originated from some foul substances thrown upon the ground occupied by Mr. Geffroy. Mr. Geffroy had several mechanics in his employ: most of them died, and in only a few hours after they were attacked. Two members of Mr. Champlin's household

were smitten with this disease: one of them, Miss Ruth Channing, afterwards wife of Rev. Caleb Tenny, very narrowly escaped. A case occurred in the residence of Mr. David M. Coggeshall. A death, which occasioned general grief, was that of Mr. Tillinghast, of the firm of Greene & Tillinghast. He was one of our best and most influential citizens. It was quite remarkable, that, in a street narrow and compact as that of Thames, the disease never crossed to the west side, and extended only short distances, north and south of Mr. Geffroy's house. Such a visitation was very surprising, as *our* town, on account of its uniform salubrity, was the resort of invalids from far and near.

Newport has always been noted for the longevity of its inhabitants. The great age to which many of them attain is recorded in almost every number of the "Newport Mercury," a journal now in the one hundred and ninth year of its age.

CLIMATE. — The town, until within a very few years, was wholly exposed to the sea. There were, in my day, only about a dozen dwellings

east of the road now called Bellevue Avenue; viz., those of Messrs. Hazard, Easton, Irish, F. Brinley, William Tilley, Peleg Gardner, Thomas Wickham, Fry, Pollock, Harkness, and Hunt. The foregoing were owners and occupants. But very few respectable dwellings were leased, and to this circumstance the town was indebted for a permanent instead of a floating population: for very many years, there was not a noticeable increase or decrease.

The spot once called "the Hill," — the highest elevation between Thames Street and the beach — has become the property of rich people; and the transformation of dingy, unsightly dwellings into quite handsome edifices seems almost miraculous. I will now return to the topic, "Climate," from which I have allowed myself to digress a little. The fog, borne in by the south winds from the sea, at early morn, was always considered healthful, so entirely the reverse of evaporation in low lands; and, when very dense, many preferred vapor to sea-bathing. This healthful humidity was favorable to female comeliness. It was an infallible cosmetic with those born in the town. Girls who live in great



cities eight months in the year, and who only resort to this Eden during the summer solstice, must not expect to gain the peach-bloom tint so exquisite once on the cheeks of Newport's fair daughters; and it is reasonable to believe, that the deterioration in the home-born of this generation is owing to the change for the worse in the food, exercise, dress, and hours of amusement, of the present day, as compared with the good old primitive habits of Newport society sixty-five years ago.

There is another noticeable fact with regard to the climate of Newport. In Boston, which is only about seventy miles from Newport, there prevails, in the spring of the year, a north-east wind, which, if not unhealthy, is unutterably disagreeable, producing in many a painful stricture across the chest, and exciting inelegant, if not irreverent, expletives, such as I should not be willing to repeat. To *enjoy* this east wind in perfection, just embark from Boston in a fishing "craft," in the month of May, bound to the Bay of Chaleur; and you will find nine times out of ten, before you have passed Cape Cod, that you have imbibed enough of it to suffice for a lifetime.

Now, in Newport, one is seldom annoyed by a north-east wind: it becomes tempered by its over-land journey. I never felt obliged to increase my clothing, or to guard my ears and lungs, on account of it. The intense frigidity of northern blasts is so softened by the warmth of the Gulf-stream, that the climate of Newport in the winter and spring is much milder than that of Boston. I often visited the beach in winter, when the wind was strong from the south-east, to hear the roar of the breakers, and to watch their wild and grand crests as they rushed on the shore; and was surprised to find that the temperature of the water would have answered for bathing, if the atmosphere had been equally warm.

It was ascertained by the owners of the beach farms, that the immense shoals of fish, thrown in by the surf, might be easily caught in seines of sufficient magnitude, and converted, by the help of kelp and sand, into a valuable compost. I have already alluded to the seine fishery at the beach, but have not spoken of the effect of the compost upon the olfactory nerves of those who visited the island. It was urged by them, that

there could be no greater nuisance than the putrid fish-heaps intended for manure, and that the health of the town would be endangered by allowing its continuance. I was well acquainted with the facts of the case, being a clerk to the owners or agents of four of the largest of the beach farms. The manufacture of the nets required the importation of large quantities of seine-twine from England, and furnished employment to a number of men and women. Now and then, large barley crops were needed for the manufacture of malt, at one establishment in town, and at several in Albany. To obtain these crops, alternate layers of sand, fish, and seaweed were spread upon the land, I believe in August and September. Whenever other culture was preferred, then the three articles above mentioned were turned into muck-heaps. The effluvia was unmistakable; but none were annoyed save those who were particularly sensitive. When last passing from Tiverton to the island, I was regaled with this *fragrant* memorial of boyish days. I never heard of any deleterious effects from the use of the manhaden-fishery as a manure. There have

been such striking changes since I left my native place, that it is hard for me to identify localities, once familiar, especially tracts of land fertile under grass and tillage, now built over, or appropriated to floriculture. One spot I well recollect,—the lot on the beach road, now belonging to Mr. Sears. Its yield of grass was so heavy in 1801, that the owner had to remove portions of it, as fast as cut, to neighboring pasture lands, to be cured.

TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN.—Perhaps one of the most remarkable celestial phenomena, certainly the greatest in our day and generation, occurred on the 16th of June, 1806, at 10 o'clock, A.M. There had been much anxiety lest the weather should prove unfavorable; but this did not prevent *juveniles* from preparing a quantity of smoked glass, with which to screen the eye in its persistent gaze upwards; and so exorbitant was the demand upon the glaziers, that, in some instances, perfect panes were broken, to serve the purpose of partial obscuration.

The daybreak presaged a brilliant morning. The air was profoundly still, and laden with

the sweet breath of dawn. As the hour of the eclipse approached, the sky gradually darkened; the birds returned to their nests; and the fowls went back to their roosts, sure that the even-tide had come, inviting to their accustomed repose. Every house had its expectant gazers. The noise of the streets subsided to the quietude of a shady covert. The harbor where I stood, presented the loveliest scene imaginable. Vessels, with their passive, loosened sails, waiting the usual morning breeze; Fort Wolcott, with its banks of emerald green; and the sea enveloped in a semi-transparent haze, — rendered those moments among the most memorable of my life. When newspapers reached our lovely island the day following, it was amusing to scan the notices of the great event. Prose and poetry, in every style and measure, vied in illustrating the momentary total eclipse of the world's great luminary. .

VALUE OF REAL ESTATE. — By reference to the tax-book in Newport in 1852, I ascertained that only twelve non-residents, *alias* summer visitors, were named as owners of real estate, —

four from Boston, viz. Messrs. Bourne, Derby, Sears, and Mason; and eight from New York and other places. The four gentlemen from Boston were assessed on \$47,500 real, and on \$65,000 personal estate! It may therefore be admitted, that the above, with those from New York, viz. Messrs. Hall, De Rham, Kane, Lawrence, Wetmore, Middleton, &c., were the pioneers in transforming the almost primeval shades of Newport, where never before a bird had been startled by a footstep or by the report of a gun, into elegant estates, combining the attractions of the sea, with the rich cultivation, the blooming gardens, and the velvet lawns, seldom found near the shore. Since then, fabulous prices have been paid for desirable situations. When in Newport in 1857, I visited the locality where, in boyish days, I had removed the bars for the entrance or exit of my mother's horse and cow, and where I practised sundry rural gymnastics: to my surprise, not a vestige of the famous four-acre lot was visible. In the place of the once, to me, beautiful enclosure stands a portion of the Fillmore House, and many less pretentious buildings. The lot was sold, as I understood at

the time, to Lieutenant-Governor Collins, at about \$800, and used by him, for a number of years, as a pasture. Our homestead, at the corner of Mary and School Streets, was *given away* for nearly the same sum. The farm belonging to my father's estate in the near neighborhood, at Fort Adams, was sold for four or five thousand dollars. The same property now is worth "a mint of money." The price for landed property then (1803) was not deemed low; for the place was not growing in wealth or population. The commercial enterprise, apparent when the Champlins, Vernons, Gibbsses, Gardners, Robinsons, &c., &c., flourished, had nearly died out; and who could have imagined that such torpor in trade would ever be followed by an activity so remarkable as that of the present day?

FUEL. ARTIFICIAL ILLUMINATION.—In my boyhood, the forests of New England were thought sufficient for the supply of fuel for all time. No one dreamt of an inadequate store for all seasons. Gradually, however, reports came that the woods began to show signs of thinness. The lofty pine, the beautiful maple; the wide-spread

oak, and noble walnut, had soon to bow their heads in obedience to the pressing wants of the islanders. By and by, a discovery was made, that, at no greater distance than seven or eight miles from Newport, coal could be obtained at a less price than the current rate for wood. The news spread very soon, that this anthracite would compensate for any deficiency in wood. It was found, however, to be too hard for ordinary purposes; and, after a fair trial, utterly failed of acceptance, save in a very few families. A good deal of Scotch coal was brought from New York; which was consumed in grates, and in stoves suited for such fuel. The discovery of anthracite caused quite a sensation in Boston; and it was not long before a company was formed and incorporated in that town, called the "Rhode-Island Coal Company." Mr. Moses Hayes was the president, and Colonel Joseph May the secretary and treasurer. I had a certificate for five shares *given to me*, which was fortunate, as they yielded nothing. The last time I was in Newport, I learned, that the mine, after a lapse of years, had been re-opened, and was yielding quite a good article for manufac-



turing purposes whenever intense heat was required. Just at the right moment were brought to light in Pennsylvania those immense beds of coal, formed from petrified wood, first burned and then buried for ages in mother earth, until needed. What an incalculable blessing that vast mining district! The fuel supplied by this beneficent dispensation of Providence is not only enjoyed by those living on the borders of the Atlantic, but by dwellers on nearly all of the inland rivers of the country; and big ships are impelled by this mighty agent, even around the globe.

Our forefathers were content to grope at night by the light of a farthing candle, and, to ignite it, had recourse to a tinder-box, with its flint and steel accompaniments. How little is thought, in this lucifer-match age, of the hard times of our progenitors, especially on a winter morning, when they were compelled, with tinder-box between their knees (often containing damp tinder), to catch a spark, if a spark would abide long enough to be caught by a brimstone match! It was an after-thought, the discovery and application of phosphorus as an ignitable agent. Candles were a great luxury (little children

were obliged to find their way to bed in the dark). There were two kinds: the inferior were of the *dipt* class, with large wicks requiring the use of snuffers (an article almost unknown in this age of gas) every few minutes. From the *dipt* we advanced to the mould candles; and, in order to insure greater hardness and whiteness, the richest families substituted mutton tallow: that from beef, having a yellow hue, was accounted of much less value. By and by, whale-oil was introduced in a few families, but only a few, as the smoke was offensive. Spermaceti oil and candles followed. The last and greatest luxury was the wax candle. Gas was manufactured from coal, and exhibited by Mr. David Melville, as early as 1804, in the Representatives' Hall in the State House. The light was brilliant; but how to render the gas innocuous was a secret for a later period to make patent. I was one of the boys, with staring eyes, who witnessed the experiment; and now every city and large town in the United States is supplied with it.

LIBERTY TREE.— We of this age can hardly comprehend the significance attached to the

planting of a tree which was to be consecrated, every fibre of it, — root, trunk, limb, branch, and twig, — as the symbol of national liberty. The words “American Liberty” were hateful words to the Tories; and they vented their spleen upon this symbol of deliverance from the British yoke. But it was not possible for threats or overt injuries to crush the spirit which inaugurated the planting of it.

Whenever the name of the successful candidate for the Presidency had, in due time, been ascertained and declared, then commenced in Newport preparations for celebrating the inauguration at the coming 4th of March. I remember the scenes which took place when John Adams was inducted into office, 4th of March, 1797; and when Mr. Jefferson received the distinguished honor, in 1801; and, in 1809, when Mr. Madison took the accustomed oath. At all these celebrations, and amidst the uproar, the Liberty Tree, at the head of Thames Street, was surmounted with the star-spangled banner, and, in the evening, illuminated with as many lamps as there were limbs and branches. It was the main spot for assembling the partisans of the

fortunate candidate. When Mr. Jefferson was heralded as the victor over Mr. Adams, then the uproar was measureless, owing to the triumph of the Republicans over the Federalists.

This tree, so dear to my childhood, remained for a long time after my removal from Newport; and not until the infirmities incident to age rendered it necessary was the axe laid to its root. The spot should long ago have been occupied by a commemorative monument.

STONE MILL. — The problem concerning the origin and purpose of this ancient structure is no nearer solution than it was two hundred years, and more, ago. Speculations of all sorts with regard to it, both here and abroad, have nearly died out; and notwithstanding the allusion in an ancient deed to the ownership of the land, "my stone mill standing thereon," it has never been imagined, that the aforesaid proprietor had any thing to do with the construction of this unique pile of stone and mortar. The very style and grace of the structure preclude the idea that it could have been erected upon almost a barren waste, merely to grind Indian

corn to powder. Not a vestige of any similar edifice has ever been seen on this continent. The notion that Indian sagacity might, without a precedent, have wrought such a massive and artistic work, is taxing credulity unwarrantably.

It strikes me as reasonable as any previous theory regarding this unaccountable handiwork, that a race of men, unknown to modern times, might, upon reaching this beautiful spot (finding stone in abundance, with shells and sand easily convertible into mortar), be impelled to rear a memorial of some familiar home legend. Let us be grateful that we have so innocent a topic for the gossip and wonder of the new-comers to Newport, and for the speculations of men of science.

When the population was native, "the mill" stood uninjured; but since the place has been given up, in a good degree, to aliens, it has been found necessary to wall it in, so as to bar out a new genus of peckers, known by the name of "stone-peckers."

MOCK FUNERAL. — Very shortly after the death

of Washington, the whole country, from the intense excitement which the event had occasioned, held meetings to determine upon the most appropriate methods for demonstrating their grief at so great a national bereavement. In most of the cities and large towns, eulogies were delivered in churches by ministers of the greatest repute, and by surviving officers of the army and navy. In addition to these expressions of public grief, there were, in a few instances, mock military and civic funerals. It was a gala-day in Newport for the children, when the solemnities were observed. At sunrise, noon, and sunset, the artillery company (incorporated in 1741) fired minute guns. At twelve o'clock, a military and civic procession was formed, and proceeded to Trinity Church, where, after appropriate religious exercises, a eulogy was pronounced by Major Daniel Lyman, a distinguished citizen, a member of the bar, and also of the Society of Cincinnati, whose badge struck my eye as the *cortége* passed by. Upon the close of the services at the church, in the broad aisle of which had been placed a coffin, covered with a pall, on which were laid a sword, a sash, and an army

cocked hat, the military formed in order of rank, and, with the citizens, marched to solemn music, following a hearse bearing the *insignia* of the man "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," towards the common burying-ground, so called; and there, a grave having been previously prepared, was deposited the *coffin* of the General, over which were discharged volleys of musketry. At the close of the ceremony, the band struck up "Hail to the Chief;" and the military returned to "quarters," and were dismissed.

The upper story of the duck factory, overlooking the burial-place, was appropriated to the use of the women and children; and such a throng of babies and young people was seldom seen before in our town. The scene is indelibly woven into my memory, especially the mass of people in black. The color, to a boy of ten years, was sombre enough, and remained for a while an enigma, which an elder brother found it difficult to explain

ODD PEOPLE. — Newport was a wonderfully queer place in the olden time, having some

strange customs, one of which was the military salute paid to young married people, on the evening, or rather night, of their marriage, provided the husband was a member of the "artillery company." Whenever it was ascertained, that such a marriage had taken place, notice was given to a section of the company to meet at the armory with two musicians, and, with guns loaded and primed, from thence to proceed at midnight to the house of the happy couple so quietly (in slippers or stocking-feet, according to the weather) as to avoid any unusual sound, and then and there fire a volley loud enough to rouse a neighborhood; following the same with a drum-and-fife salute or serenade. If the husband happened to be a commissioned officer, he was honored with a salute from the muzzle of a brass field-piece. These latter explosions occasioned the loss of many panes of glass, which the happy and *highly* honored man was expected to replace. An uncle of mine received the salute from a brazen six-pounder, and had to pay the penalty. There were no impertinent police-officers or watchmen interfering in such matters then, as they do now.



Newport liked to encourage odd people in their whimwhams. For instance, there was a middle-aged gentleman who received particular attention from all whom he met on his way from above the brick market, now called City Hall, down Thames Street to Townsend's Coffee House at "'Change" hours, twelve o'clock. He was genial and extremely polite; wore powder; and but for his exquisite neatness, contrasting with, and making painfully noticeable, the ordinary dress of others, he would have passed up and down street as a good-looking man, such as now usually crowd the street at mid-day. As soon as he came in sight, the naughty boys would shout, "Here comes bandbox!" He received the title of Beau.

There was an old bachelor of great wealth, who once ventured on a courting expedition in a pleasure boat having a flaunting pennon, known as one of the crack boats of the time, and he himself arrayed in a manner not befitting his age. The lady whose hand and heart he felt sure of obtaining, lived on the "Neck," in the neighborhood of Fort Adams, and was considered very attractive in town and country, whilst

the hopeful wooer was ungainly, commonplace, and nearly double the age of the fair one. Wealth constituted his sole passport to a woman's good graces, and even this had failed him in several previous attempts; but "love is blind," and hope encouraged him to try again. Our hero prepared himself for the adventure with care. He wore a costly beaver, — a great luxury in those days; buff-leather small clothes, satin vest, silk stockings, velvet shoes, and silver knee and shoe buckles. After landing at a convenient inlet, the hopeful "youth," in the company of a waggish friend, bent his steps to a lordly mansion, once the property of an English Tory. At his entrance, a low bow was met by a respectful courtesy. When both were seated, there was silence for a few moments, at last broken by the *courtier*, who asked the lady if she heard a sound like the tick of a watch, to which question she gave an affirmative nod. "Well," said he, wonderfully encouraged, "that is the tick from a splendid watch in my breeches pocket." Upon this announcement, the lady, convulsed with laughter, by signs dismissed the intruder from her door. He, poor man, never doubting

that his rich apparel, large fortune, and superb time-keeper (not then, as now, an every-day possession), would obtain for him the long-coveted prize, returned home, a wiser, if not a better, man.

Another oddity lived on the Parade, and rendered himself conspicuous by the use of big words. Frequently he would gather an audience by his gesticulations and rodomontade. I happened once to be near his premises, when a humble woman was passing who had ignorantly excited his ire. He stopped her, and, stretching himself to his utmost height, said, "Rebecca S., Rebecca S., I wish you to know that I am a *respector* of nuisances; and that transcendent punishment awaits you for suffering your ducks to lie, night after night, dormant in my beef-barrel, unless, without further surreption, you remove the bipeds." The plain English of the matter was simply this: This grandiloquent railer owned a strip of land contiguous to the dwelling of the ignorant trespasser, and had left in his gateless yard an old one-headed barrel lying on its bilge, which had formed a comforta-

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ble lodge for her two ducks; and for this offence, when no "*fence*" had been raised by the complainant, he berated her in these ridiculous and other incomprehensible words.

A CLERICAL ANECDOTE. — There was a friend of mine, born and brought up in Newport, who entered the ministry from a pure love of the profession. He was serious, without voluble or volatile tendencies. His pleasant look showed that he could be amused, but, like the Prince of Denmark, "was never known to smile." He eschewed merriment, to say the least. It was the fault of *his time* (sixty years since), that ministers felt obliged to wear a sober countenance, and to measure their words by a canonical gauge. When this gentleman obtained a settlement in Massachusetts, his mien impressed some persons with the idea that he belonged to the Methodists. He was never known to be guilty of a witticism but once. He had formed an intimate acquaintance with a clergyman in a town next to the one where he ministered, a man very tall and thin, with a chalky face, who wore round a wonderfully long neck a large white stuffed

stock. These two agreed to take a journey, quite a long one, as it was then held; viz., from Charlestown to a town distant about twenty-three miles. How long they were preparing for such a venture was never known. In due time, however, the Christian brothers, with *Sunday* looks, having hired an *old-fashioned chaise* (not old-fashioned then), and a horse of questionable speed, and swung their trunk upon the axle, started on a little summer trip. Upon approaching the tavern where they proposed spending the night, they saw a large gravestone at the right hand of the main entrance, bearing the following inscription: "Rum, Gin, Brandy." A girl, coming to the door, was accosted by one of the serious gentlemen in the words following, — to wit, "I did not know" (pointing to the stone) "that those persons were dead;" to which she, having glanced at the pallid faces of the travellers, responded, "If they are dead, I should judge, from your looks, that you must have been the chief mourners at the funeral."

CLERICAL ANECDOTE No. 2.— Another friend of mine sought, whilst a lad, to obtain his fa-

ther's consent to his leaving the dry-goods business (to which he had been apprenticed), in order to become a minister of the gospel. The idea of his leaving home, of his leaving Newport, for a residence in another State, to be educated, was so repugnant to his father's feelings, that he firmly withheld his consent. So there was no change, until the master of the young man, one day, whilst sitting in the back room of his store, overheard the following colloquy between a customer and his apprentice: "My young man, I wish to buy a handsome coat-pattern." The apprentice showed him several pieces; but the customer was not suited, until, looking at the shelves, he saw a piece of extra gloss and finish, when he said, "I like that; I will take two yards; but will it wear well, my young man?" The young man answered, "I don't think it will wear well; for yesterday I sold a pattern from the same piece, and it was returned because the tailor pronounced it *tender*." The tender conscience of the young man so pleased the customer, that he bought two yards from a piece that had been fully proved. The master, without saying a word to the ap-

prentice, upon meeting his father gave him an account of what had happened, which so gratified the parent's heart, that, at dinner-time, he said to his son, "H——, you may study for the ministry." The young man availed himself at once of the liberty, was ordained when twenty-five years of age, and remained in professional service for forty-five years, when feebleness of body compelled his resignation.

I cannot close these "Recollections," without gratefully acknowledging my indebtedness to one with whom I grew up, from whom I received many valuable mercantile hints, and an example worthy of the closest imitation.

JULIUS AUBOYNEAU was for many years the prominent clerk in Gibbs & Channing's counting-house. In 1816, he was made supercargo of ship *Eagle*, on a voyage to St. Denis, Isle of Bourbon. Upon his return home, he resumed his clerkship; and his familiarity with its duties, together with his graceful penmanship, rendered his services invaluable. We were very much attached to each other; and the intimacy never

flagged during the few years (after his return from India) which preceded his death. His manner was courteous; his temper, charming; his integrity, unassailable.

Mr. Auboyneau married one of the most amiable, intelligent, and beautiful girls in Newport, — the youngest daughter of the Hon. Francis Malbone. She soon became a widow; and with her child, an only son, went to France, where her husband's brother, Armand Auboyneau, a noble-hearted man, lived, who manifested for her the truest brotherly kindness to the end of his retired and worthy life. She did not long survive the death of this beloved brother.

GEORGE ENGS. — He was one of the prominent members of the "Social Union," and with him I was very intimate. He had none of the buoyancy, flippancy, and bluster, so common in most young men of his time. He was staid in look, manner, and utterance, inflexibly upright, self-accusative, of an even temper, and well informed. Devoted to the business pursued for many years by his father, Mr. William Engs, he acquired habits of industry which commended



him to general approbation. Pleasure with him never amounted to a necessity. I am reminded of his patience during a very severe illness, which I was permitted to alleviate.

In taking leave of my readers, I hope that my reminiscences of Newport sixty-seven years since may have afforded them some pleasure. The volume was written at first simply for my own amusement, and that of a few friends. An after-thought, however, very common with authors, suggested the possibility of a wider circulation.

The peculiarities which characterized the period of my youth were to me full of interest. In this fast age, so rapid have been the changes for the better, at least as many imagine, that we are apt to overlook all that was admirable and enduring in the lives of a painstaking and worthy population.

We may laugh over the dress, manners, and usages of a by-gone age; but each generation will in turn furnish merriment for the next.

I mark the growth and prosperity of my native place, — its stately hotels, elegant mansions, beautiful cottages, and the incorporated and free

libraries; but naturally the heart of an old man fondly esteems the old time as the best time, fraught as it is with his earliest and strongest memories,—with his first love of home, of native place, of country; with the dawning consciousness of natural beauty; with the first manly impulses towards independence, and the awakening of the religious sensibilities.

I have lived and been happy in other places; but, if any name is written on my heart, it is the name of Newport, where my parents were born, and where my father and numerous relatives are buried.\* Unequalled as Newport is in my eyes in natural beauty, I hope she may excel in every good word and work, so that her sons, to the latest generation, may be proud to acknowledge their birth-place.

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\* My mother died in Boston, May 25, 1834, aged 82, and was buried in Cambridge.











